THE SPIRITVAL CONFLICT.

Writen in Italian by a deuout Seruant of God, and lately translated into English out of the same language.

Militia est vita hominis super terram. Iob. cap. 7. ver. 1.

BIBLIOTHECA
LAMBETHANA

1610
1610.25

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND Mothers, the Abbesse and Sisters of the Monastery of S. Andrevv in Venice, desirous of christian perfection.

I Find my selfe somuch bound to the feruent desire vvhich I knovve to be in you, of vvalkīg o a pace in the loue of Christ crucified that seing the needes of your soules, I cānot any vvay satisfie my selt vvith the labours vvhich hitherto I haue taken, as vvell for that I account my s lfe to haue receiued already full payment by the comfort vvhich assured hope hath giuen mee of the plētifull fruit vvhich the vvord of god vvould bring forth in your harts; as also for that I haue doone much lesse then you desired, or then vvas answerable to the debt I ovve you.

Therfore beeing desirous in some part to supply it, and hauing in my hands at this time some vvritten papers concerning the mortification of passions (of the vvhich thing I haue

ſo many times diſcourſed vvith you) I thought it good for your great cõfort and helpe, to put them in print, and dedicate them vnto you.

For our life in earth being a continuall vvarfare, they may ſerue you to figth againſt your ſelues, ſince that by our Lord you are called and particularly choſen to this no leſſe glorious, then hard conflict. VVe declare not here hovv to vanquish cities, but hovv to ouercome our vvil; not to cõquer foren kingdoms, but hovv to get dominion of that kingdome vvhich is vvithin our ſelues.

To this ſpirituall Battel I inuite you, and ſo doth alſo our Captaine: vvho for vs hauing left his life vpon the croſſe, and by his death ouercome the vvorld, calleth vs to this victory and death of our ſelues, that vve may liue eternally vvith him.

Your ſeruant in Chriſt. Hierome Counte of Portia, the elder.

THE SPIRITVAL CONFLICT.

Non coronabitur nisi qui legitime certauerit. 2. Tim. 2.

He shall not be crovvned that doth not striue lavvfully.

VVherein the perfection of a christian man consisteth: and of foure things necessary to obtaine the same.

Chap. 1.

IF thou hast a desire (most deare daughter in Christ) to attaine vnto the height and top of perfection, and by

litle and little to draw neare vnto God, and to become one ſpirit with him, (which is the greateſt & moſt excellent enterpriſe that poſsibly can be named or immagined.) Firſt of all, thou muſt know wherein conſiſtes the truth and perfection of ſpirituall life: for that many without any farther cogitation of care, ſuppoſe it to be placed in the rigor, and auſteritie of life, in maceration of the fleſh in waring of haircloth, inwatching, in faſting, and other like ſharpenes and bodily labour.

Others, and eſpecially women perſuade themſelues that they are neare vnto it when they ſay many vocall prayers, heare many Maſſes, and long ſeruice, frequent the church

and Sacraments.

And many other alſo, (amongeſt the which you may finde ſome clad with religious habite liuing in cloiſters) perſuade themſelues that this perfection whollye conſiſteth of the frequenting the Quire, in ſilence, in ſolitarineſſe, and in well ordered diſcipline. And thus ſome in theſe, and ſome in other external exerciſes beleeue, that the perfect ſtate of a ſpirituall man is founded: but yet notwithſtanding it is not ſo, for although the foreſaide exerciſes are ſomtimes meanes to obtaine ſpirite, ſometimes fruits of ſpirite, yet cãnot it be ſaide, that in theſe onely conſiſteth chriſtian perfection, and the true ſpirite: they are without dowt forcible means,

for obtaining the ſpirit tothoſe that do wel, and diſcreetly vſe them, for the better getting of ſtrength & force againſt their proper malice, and frailitie, to arme themſelues againſt the aſſaults of our common enemies; & to prouide vs of thoſe ſpirituall helpes, whiche are very neceſſarie to all the ſeruants of God, but ſpecially to yong beginners. They are alſo fruits of the ſpirit in them that are indeede ſpirituall and illuminated; who chaſten their body becauſe it hath offended their Creator, and to ſubdue and keepe it vnder in his ſeruice: they keepe ſilence and liue ſolitarily, to eſchewe euen the leaſt thing that might offend God, and to haue ſpirituall ioy and their conuerſati-

on in heauen.

They attend to the worſhip of God, and workes of pietie, they praye and frequent the moſt holy Sacraments, for the glorie of his diuine Maieſtie, & to vnite themſelues alwayes more and more in loue with him.

But now vnto others, who place their whole foundation in theſe aforeſayde externall exerciſes, they may miniſter ſometimes (not for anye deſert in themſelues (for they are al moſt holy) but through the default of them that vſe them) more occaſion of ruine, then doe apparant and manifeſt ſinnes: whilſt they being only adicted to them, do leaue the inward man forſaken, and in the hands of their naturall

inclinations, and of the inuiſible diuel; who ſeeing them out of the right waie, permitteth them not only to continue the aforeſaide exerciſes with great delight, but alſo to walk according to their owne vaine fancie as it were amidſt the delights of Paradiſe, where they perſwade themſelues to be eleuated amongſt the quiers of Angells, and ſeeme in a maner to feele God within them: at which times they finde themſelues altogether ſwallowed vp in certaine meditations, full of high curious & delightfull points, and as it were forgetting the worlde, and all creatures, they ſeeme to be rapt to the third heauen: but in how great errors they finde themſelues entangled, and how far

they

they are from that perfection which we goe about to finde, may eaſily be perceiued, if we conſider their life and manners: for theſe kind of people are wont too bee to much addicted to their owne iudgement, curious and diligent obſeruers, and murmurers at other mens actions and words, but if they be touched in any one point of their vaine reputation, or debarred from thoſe deuotions which they commonly vſe, or reſtrained from their accouſtomed often receiuing, they ar without meaſure re offended, and diſquieted.

And if God (to bring them to true knowledge) ſend them or permit them to ſuffer any trouble, infirmitie, and perſecution, (which neuer happen

but by his diuine will, and are the very touchſtone of the loialtie of his ſeruants (then they diſcouer their falſe foundation and the inward rottennes and corruption of their pride; ſo that in euery accident whether it be ſorrowful, or ioyful, they will not reſigne or humble them ſelues vnder his diuine hand, neither according to the example of his humbled and afflicted ſonne, doe they abaſe themſelues vnder euery creature, accompting their perſecutors for their deareſt friendes, and imbracing them as the inſtruments of his diuine goodneſſe, and workers of their ſpiritual health, true reformation and mortification.

Wherefore it is moſt certaine, that all ſuch are in very

great

great danger, for hauing their internall eie dimmed, and beholding onely their externall acts, (which are good) they attribute to themſelues many degrees of perfection.

And thus puft vppe with pride, they become iudges of others, and there is left no means of their conuerſion, but by the extraordinary goodnes and help of God; for it is more eaſie to reduce to well doing an open and publike ſinner, then one that ſinnes ſecretly, and is couered with the cloake of apparent vertue.

Thou ſeeſt therefore good daughter moſt plainely, that the trueth of ſpirituall life, is not to be found in the aforeſaid things, in that maner that we haue ſpoken of. And thou

must vnderstand, that it consisteth in no other thing, but in a true knowlege of the bountie, and greatnes of God, and of our owne littlenesse, or nothing, and naturall inclination to al euill; in the hatred of our selues, and in the loue of God, in the full abnegation of our owne will, and in resigning it to the wil of God, subiecting our selues not only to him, but for his loue to euery creature, and all this for no other end, but onely to please him, and bicause he deserues thus to be loued and serued.

This is the denying of our selues, which our Redeemer doth seeke in vs. This is the obedience whereunto he calleth his faithfull seruãts, both by word and example. This is

the croſſe which by his ſweeteſt law of loue is laide vppon their ſhoulders.

To this loue, and true charity, ſo oft & particularly in his laſt Supper hee inuiteth his deare Diſciples, with all his friends and children.

And becauſe thou aſpiring to the top of ſo great perfection, muſt vſe force with thy ſelfe, and couragiouſly ouercome thy owne will, both in great and little things: it behoueth thee of neceſsity with al redineſſe of mind to prepare thy ſelfe to this combate, ſith the crowne of ſo great a victorie is not giuen, but to them that fight valiantly. This battel as of all other it is the hardeſt: ſo the victorie gotten by the ſame, is of all other moſt

glo-

glorious and most deare vnto God.

For if thou attend to tread downe and to kill all thy disordered appetites, and desires, euen the very least; thou shalt doo a thinge more pleasing, and a greater seruice to Almightie God, then if keeping any one of them voluntarilye aliue, thou shouldest whip thy selfe till the bloud ran downe; or shouldest faste more then the old Hermets and Anchorites, or shouldest conuert to good life thousands of soules: for although the conuersion of soules be more deare to our Sauior in it selfe, then the mortification of one small passion of our will; yet notwithstanding thou oughtest not to wil or work any thing more prin-

cipally,

cipally, then that which the ſame Sauiour moſt ſtrickly wills and requiers of thee: and hee without doubt is more pleaſed that thou ſhouldſt labor with thy ſelfe to mortifie thy paſsions, then that leauing one vnmortified in thee, thou shouldeſt ſerue him in anye other thing, though greater and of more moment in it ſelfe.

Now then O daughter, ſince thou ſeeſt wherein Chriſtian Perfection confiſteth: and that to obtaine the ſame, thou muſt take vppon thee a continuall and ſharpe warre: it is neceſſary that thou like a valiant champion and enemie of thy ſelfe, do prouide thee of foure things, as neceſſarie armour, to the end thou mayſt

get the victorie and remaine a conquereſſe in this ſpirituall battell, and theſe be, firſt, diſtruſt of thy ſelfe, ſecond, confidence in God, third, exerciſe, fourth, prayer: of al which by the helpe of God I will intreat particularly and briefely.

Of the Diſtruſt of our ſelues.

Chap. 2.

THe diſtruſt of thy ſelfe is obtained three maner of waies. Firſt, that thou acknowledge & conſider deeply thine own vileneſſe & nothing, and that indeede thou canſt not obtaine any thing that is good of thy ſelfe: a man beeing no more able to doe anye good meritorious

woorke, then a ſtone that (I may ſo ſay) is able of it ſelf to go vpwards, & we hauing no les inclination to euill, then the ſaid ſtone to the centre of the earth.

The ſecond is, that thou with humble prayers demand the ſame of God, for it is his gift, & to obtain it thou muſt firſt of all beholde thy ſelfe as bare and naked of the ſame, & altogither vnable to attain vnto it of thy ſelfe: & hauing done this, then preſent thy ſelf before the maieſtie of God, with an aſſured hope, that his diuine bountie wil grant it vnto thee: and thus preſenting thy ſelf oftentimes before thy Lord, and with perſeuerance expecting it from his liberall handes ſo long as ſhall ſeeme

beſt

beſt to his diuine prouidence, without doubt thou ſhalt obtaine it.

The third way is, that as oft as thou shalt chaunce to fal into any defect, thou ſodainely turne the eies of thy mind vnto thy afore ſaide weakneſſe and vnableneſſe to do good, which vntill it be knowen to the botome, and acknowledged, thou shalt neuer ceaſe to fall.

For euery one that will be vnited vnto that light and vncreated veritie, the true knowledge of himſelfe is neceſſarie: which knowledge the diuine clemency is accuſtomed commonly to giue to the prowde and preſumptuous, by ſuffering them to fall, calling them by the ſame to true know-

ledge of their owne impotency and nothing. And ſo much God permitteth them to fall, more or leſſe, by how much their pride is greter or leſſe; ſo that where there were no preſumption or pride, (as in the bleſſed virgine Mary there was not) there likewiſe there ſhould be no fall. So that if at any time thou happen to fall, haue recourſe preſently with thy cogitations, to the humble acknowledging of thy ſelfe, and with earneſt praier beſeech thy Sauiour to giue thee true light that thou maiſt perfectly know thy ſelf, if thou be not willing to fall againe into more grieuous defaultes.

Of the Truſt and Confidence in God.

Chap. 3.

THe diſtruſt of our ſelues, although in this battellit be ſo needfull as we haue ſaid before, yet not withſtanding, if we haue but it onely, either we ſhall runne away from the battell, or abiding ſtil, be vanquiſhed and ouercome of our enemies. And therefore, beſides this, it is alſo neceſſary to haue our whole truſt & confidence in God; hoping and expecting from him alone all good and helpe whatſoeuer. And this in like maner is obtained three maner of wayes.

The firſt, in demanding it

of his diuine maieſtie.

The ſecond, by conſidering & beholding with the eie of our faith, his omnipotencie and infinite wiſedome, to the which nothing is impoſsible or difficult. And that his boũtie beeing without meaſure, with an vnſpeakable deſire he ſtandeth ready, and prepared euery houre, yea euery moment, to giue vnto vs all that which is needefull for ſpirituall life, and the entiere victory of our ſelues. And how can it be poſsible, that our heauenly ſhepheard, who for the ſpace of thirtie three yeeres folowed this ſtrayed ſheepe with ſo lowde cries, that therewith he became as it were hoarce, and that alſo by a way ſo laborious and thorny, that he ſhed al his

pretious bloud, & finally, loſt his life. Now when this ſame sheepe followeth him, calleth vpon him, and prayeth vnto him, hee wil not turne his eies of life vnto it, and heare it, and lay it vppon his diuine shoulders, reioycing thereof with his neighbors and Angelles in heauen? And who can euer beleeue, that God who ſtandeth continuallye knocking at the heart of man, deſiring to enter in, and to ſuppe with him, and communicate his guiftes vnto him; when man openeth his heart and inuiteth him, will then notwithſtanding in good earneſt turn a deafe eare vnto him, and refuſe to enter?

The third meane to obtain this holy confidence & truſt, is, to call to minde the veritie

of the holy ſcriptures, which in ſo many places do teach vs, that he which truſted in God, was neuer confounded.

There maye bee added to theſe aforeſaid an other meane to obtain at one time both the diſtruſt of our ſelues, and the confidence in God: and it is this. When thou takeſt anie thing in hand before thou determine it, and reſolue to do it, conſider thy owne debility, & the prower and goodneſſe of God, and then determine to beginne thy worke.

And if thou obſerue not this order, although it ſeeme to thee, that thou doſt all thy actions virtually in the confidence of God · yet thou ſhalt finde thy ſelfe very farr deceiued; for man of himſelfe be-

ing very apt to preſumption, the right way to worke with the diſtruſt of our ſelues, and with confidence in God, is, that the conſideration of our owne nothing, and of Gods omnipotencie goe alway before our worke: And it is alſo to be obſerued, that it ſhall oftentimes ſeeme vnto thee, that thou haſt obtaind this diſtruſt of thy ſelfe, and confidence in God, and yet it is not ſo: and the effect which will proceed of thy often fallinges, ſhall make this manifeſt vnto thee.

If therfore when by chance thou falleſt, thou be vnquiet, deiected, and perceiue thy ſelf to bee brought to a kinde of deſpaire of beeing able to goe forward, and to doe well: it is an euident ſigne that thou did-

deſt truſt in thy ſelfe, and not in God: and if thy ſadnes and diſtruſt be great, great was thy confidence in thy ſelfe, & litle was thy truſt in God. For hee that altogether diſtruſteth himſelfe, and truſteth in God, when he falles he woondereth not at it, he is not deiected or diſcouraged, acknowledging that this doth happen through his owne weakennes: neyther doth diminiſh his confidence in God, but hating aboue all things the ſinne which he is fallen into, with a quiet and a peaceable ſorrowe for the offence of his diuine maieſtie with leſſe truſt in himſelf, and greater confidence in God, and with greater corage thã before folows his enterpriſe, and purſues his enemies euen to death.

Would to God that theſe things were wel conſidered of certaine perſons, that pretend to be ſpiritual, who whē they fall into any defect, can not nor wil not be in quiet,& ſom times by reaſon of this anxiety rather then for anye other reſpect, wil needes out of hand go & ſeek their ghoſtly father: vnto whome they ought to haue recourſe principally to waſh themſelues from ſin, and alſo to get ſtrength againſt the ſame by the moſt holy Sacrament of the aultar.

Of

Of Exerciſe: and firſt of the Vnderſtanding, which We ought to keepe free from curioſitie, and ignorance.

Chap. 4.

IF we haue but onely the diſtruſt of our ſelues and confidence in God, we ſhall neuer be able to get the victorie of our ſelues, but rather ſhall runne headlong into all kind of euill. And therefore beſides theſe, Exerciſe (the third thing mentioned before) is neceſſarie.

This Exerciſe muſt bee practiſed principally with the Vnderſtanding and Will.

The Vnderſtanding muſt

bee kept from twoo things, from ignorance, and from curioſitie.

From ignorance that it may bee bright and cleare to know that which is neceſſary for the ouercomming of our vitious paſsions: which light may be obtained two maner of waies.

The firſt and principall, is praier, praying vnto the holy ghoſt, that he will vouchſafe to infuſe the ſame into our hearts.

The other a continuall exerciſe of a profound conſideration of things as they are in themſelues, and not as they appeare to be; for thus exerciſing our ſelues, we come to know the truth of thoſe things which are truely good: and the falſehood and vanitie of the other,

which neuer performe that which they promiſe in ſhew, & take away the peace of our heart.

Now deare Daughter be attentiue to that which I ſhal ſay vnto thee, for it is of great importance, that thou mayſt well know the nature and qualitie of thoſe things, which by ſundrie occaſions preſent themſelues before thee; it behoueth thee to haue a ſpeciall care, to haue thy will purged, and free from all loue and affection that is not God, or meane a to bring thee God.

For, that the vnderſtanding may diſcerne wel and rightly: it is neceſſary that it do behold and conſider the obiect ſet before it, before that the will do faſten the affection vppon it,

for at that time the vnderſtanding is free and cleare, & wel able to diſcerne but if the wil haue once placed th'affection, the vnderſtanding then, doth not diſcouer the thing as it is. For ſo much as that affection which is placed in the midſt, darkneth in ſuch ſort the vnderſtanding that it eſteemeth better of the ſame then it is in effect, and forſuch ſheweth it vnto the will, which by that is brought to loue it more ardently.

By which increaſe of loue, the vnderſtanding is yet more blinded: and thus blinded, it maketh the thing, to ſeem vnto the will farre more louelie and good then before, wherby it comes to paſſe, that theſe two powers miſerably conti-

nue euer to walke as in as circle from darkneſſe, into more obſcurity, and from error into greater errors: and therefore thou muſt bee very diligent, and vigilant in this point, neuer to ſet thy affection vppon any thing whatſoeuer, if it bee not firſt knowne, and well examined by the light of vnderſtanding, but eſpecially by the light of grace, and prayer: the which I exhort thee to do, not onely in all other things, but euen in them alſo, which are holy and good: for although they be ſo in themſelues, yet it may happen, that for circumſtance of time, of place, and of meaſure, or in reſpect of obedience they be not ſo for thee, and therfore many perſons in very commendable, and ho-

ly exerciſes haue indaungered themſelues.

Alſo wee muſt keepe our vnderſtanding with great warineſſe from curioſitie, that it know not any thing that may let or hinder our victorie, for which cauſe thou muſt purſue to the death all curioſitie of earthly things not neceſſarie, although they be lawfull: reſtrain euer thy vnderſtanding what thou canſt, and loue to make it foolish to newes or alterations of the world (be they great or little) let them be to thee as though they were not at all.

And if they be offered vnto thee, oppoſe thy ſelfe againſt them. In the deſire of knowing heauenly things, be ſober, and humble, not willing to

kuow any other thing but Chriſt crucified, and his life, & death, abandō all other things, for ſo thou ſhalt greatly pleaſe God, who accompteth them his deare frends, that only deſire of him that which is ſufficient, to loue his goodnes, and to hate themſelues, euery other thing which men deſire, and ſeeke after, is all but ſelfe loue, and ſpirituall pride. If thou do thus, thou ſhalt eſcape many deceipts, for the Deuill ſeeing that in them which attend to ſpiritual life, the will is coragious and ſtrong, aſſaieth to batter the vnderſtanding, that by this waye he may be Maiſter both of the one & the other: wherfore ſometimes to theſe men he geueth deepe and curious conceits, eſpecially to

thoſe that haue ſharpe and great wittes: to the intent, that being occupied in the ſame wherin they falſly perſwade them ſelues to enioye GOD, they may forget to purge their heart, and to attend to their owne mortification, and the knowledge of them ſelues: Thus they fall into the ſnare of pride, and make to them ſelues an Idole of their vnderſtanding, wherupon it enſueth that by little and little (at vnawares) they beginne to be perſwaded that they need not the counſell and direction of others: A thing very dangerous and very hard to be cured, the pride of the vnderſtanding being more dangerous then that of the will; for hee that is prowd of wil, wil ſomtimes

obay

obay be cauſe he houldeth an other mans opinion to be better: But he that doth aſſuredlie beleeue his owne opinion to be beſt, by whom can he be cured? how wil he ſubmitte himſelf to another mans iudgment when he taketh it not to be ſo good as his owne? If the eie of the ſoule which is the vnderſtanding, wherwith it ought to ſee & heale the pride therof be blind, and full of the ſame pride, who can cure it? & if the light become darknes and the rule, be crooked, what wil become of the reſt? Therfore ſee that thou in time oppoſe thy ſelfe to ſuch a dangerous pride, before it pearce the marrowe of thy bones Blunt the ſharpnes of thy vnderſtanding, ſubmit eaſilie thy iudg-

ment

ment to an other mans, become fooliſh for the loue of God, and thou ſhalt bee wiſer then Salomon.

Of the VVill: and of the ende Whereunto Wee muſt direct all our actions.

Chap. 5.

TO become one ſpirit with God, it is not enough to haue good deſires, and to bee prompt and ready to good workes; if we doe not all as moued by him, and to the end only to pleaſe him. In this we ſhal haue a great conflict with nature: for nature beeing drawen and moued by ſome particular commoditie or delight, many times more ſubtil-

lie, and ſweetly, doth faſten & feed it ſelfe in ſpiritual thinges than in other things, wher vpon when any thing hapeneth, propoſed and willed by God, ſodainly it doth will, and deſire it, not as moued by the will of God, nor to the ende onely he may haue the ſame will with him, but for ſome good or contentment, which it derieueth from willing the thinges willed by God. To auoyd this ſnare, which will hinder thee in the way of perfection; and to accuſtome thee to will, and worke euery thing, both as moued by god; and with pure intention to pleaſe him only (who wil be only the beginning and finall ende of all our actions & thoughts) thou ſhalt obſerue this maner; whē

any

any thing willed by God, shall offer it selfe vnto thee, doe not incline thy will vnto it, before thou hast first lifted thy vnderstanding into God, to see that it is his will: that thou desire it, both because his wil is such, and also to please him onely. And by this will thy wil being moued & drawne, let it afterwards bend it selfe to will it, as a thing willed by God and for his good pleasure only, and glorie: And in like manner when thou wouldest refuse the things not willed by God, refuse thou not vntill first thou haste fixed the eye of thy minde, on his diuine will, in such maner as we haue said. And consider that many times it shall seeme vnto thee that thou hast this motiue, and yet

it is not ſo: for nature doth ſecretly ſeeke it ſelf, wherefore it oftētimes happeneth, that that which is willed, or is refuſed meerely or principally for our owne intereſt, doth ſeeme to vs to bee willed, or not willed, to pleaſe or not to diſpleaſe God.

Therefore in the beginning of euery action, ſpoyle thy ſelfe as much as thou canſt of all mixture, whereby thou maieſt intermeddle any of thine own intereſt: and determine not to worke or refuſe any thing, till firſt thou feele thy ſelfe moued & drawen vnto it by the onely and pure will of God. If in thoſe actions which quickely paſſe, thou canſt not alwayes actually feele this motion, cōtent thy ſelfe with a virtual in-

tentiõ, to pleaſe in euery thing thy Lord God alone: but in the others, it is expedient to feele it actually in the beginning, as I haue ſaide, & when the long continuance of the ſaide actions bring daunger to make this exerciſe forgotten: take heede that thou renew it often, and keepe it waking, euen to the laſt, to auoyde the deceits of nature, which is euer ready to turne to it ſelfe, & therfore very often in proceſſe of time altereth the obiects, and chaungeth the endes of our workes.

The ſeruant of God which is not circumſpect in this, many times beginneth a worke with a motion for to pleaſe his Lorde onely; but after, by little and little, not taking heede to himſelfe, holdeth on in ſuch

ſort, delighting in the ſame, that hee forgetteth the diuine pleaſure, and doth ſo conuert him ſelfe to this delight, or ſome profite or honour that may happen vnto him, that if the ſame God doe hinder him by infirmitie, or other accidēt, or by the meanes of anye of his creatures, hee remayneth wholly troubled, diſquieted, and malecontente, and with greate difficultie is hee drawen to will ſo much as his Lorde would haue of him Wherefore recollect thy ſelfe well, & keepe alway this holie motiue quicke and liuelye in all thy workes. The which is of ſo greate force and vertue, as a man woulde hardly beleeue, ſo that a thing, (lette it bee baſe and little as thou wilt) doone

with this intent to pleaſe God onely, and for his onely glory, is infinitlie more worth than many other thinges, of moſte greate price, & valew, which are doone without this motiue.

Of two VVills which are in man, and of the Battell betweene them.

Chap. 6.

THou muſt vnderſtand O daughter that in vs there are two Wills: the one of reaſon, and therefore called reaſonable, and ſuperior: the other of ſence, which is called ſenſuall, and inferiour: the which is alſo vſually ſignified by theſe names of ſence, appetite, fleſh,

and passion.

And although both these may be called Will, yet neuertheleſſe, because reaſon it is which maketh vs men, when wee will any thing with the ſenſe only, it is not vnderſtood that it is truly willed by vs, vntill ſuch time as we incline by our ſuperior will, to will it.

Hereupon all our ſpirituall Battell principally conſiſteth in this, that this ſuperior Will being placed as in the midſt between the diuine wil, which ſtands aboue, & the inferior, which is that of the ſence, continually aſſaulted by the one and the other, whilſt either of theſe aſſayeth to draw it and to make it ſubiect, and obedient vnto them.

To thoſe that haue alrea-

dy

dy got the habite of vertue, or vice, and intend alway to procede in the ſame, this fight is not painfull, for the vertuous eaſely agree vnto the diuine will, the other follow that of the ſence without any difficultie.

But they which are full of the euil habites of vice, (eſpecially in the beginning) finde great paine and trauell, when they reſolue to change their wicked life into a better, and taking them ſelues from the world, and from the fleſh, do giue themſelues to the loue and ſeruice of Ieſus Chriſt.

For the ſtrokes which the ſuperior wil then ſuſtaineth of the diuine wil, & of the inferior, (which alwaies are skermiſhing with it) are mightie

and ſtrong, and makes it well to feel them, not without great noyance of the combatants.

None may preſume euer to ariue to any degree of vertue, nor to be able to ſerue God, if he wil not labour in good earneſt, and ſupport the paine which is to be felt in leauing thoſe delights, whereunto at firſt his affection was faſt tied.

Hence it commeth to paſſe that very fevve attaine to the ſtate of perfection, becauſe like covvardly ſouldiers they vvill not ſtand faſt, and conſtantly fight, and ſuffer the dints, vvhich the reſiſtance of an infinite number of their ſelf willsbringeth vvith it, vvhich dooth alvvayes fight againſt them: but retiring backe, leaue their vveapons & themſelues

in the power of their enemies who tyrannize ouer them.

Here is laide open a deceit by so much the more daungerous, as it is lesse perceiued, that many which attend to the spiritual life, being louers of themselues, more then is requisite (and yet in trueth they know not how to loue themselues) for the most part chuse those exercises, which most do please their taste, and they leaue the other which touch the quicke of their naturall inclinations & sensual appetite, against the whiche all reason would they should turne al the force of their fight.

Of the manner how to fight against the motions of our ſenſuality, and of the actions which the VVill hath to bring forth for to make the habite of vertue.

Chap. 7.

VVHenſoeuer thou art aſſaulted by the will of the ſence: that thou maiſt draw nearer to the will of GOD, (which knocketh and calleth vppon thee, to the end thou maiſt oppoſe thy ſelfe, & make reſiſtaunce againſt thy ſenſualitie) in diuers manners thou muſt exerciſe thy ſelfe.

Firſt when thou art aſſaulted by the ſence, it behoooueth, thee to reſiſt couragiouſlye,

that the ſuperior will, conſent not to his motions.

Secondly, when they bee ceaſed, thou muſt ſtirre them vp againe in thee, to repreſſe them with greater violence.

Afterwards it is neceſſarie that thou recall them to another new combate, to the end that thou maye driue them from thee, with a certaine diſdaine and abhorring.

Theſe two ſtirrings vp, and and prouocations to battell, thou muſt vſe in euery paſsion, and diſordinate appetite, except in carnall motions, whereof I wil ſpeake hereafter in their place.

Laſt of all, thou muſt make acts of contrary vertues: let vs put an example. Thou arte peraduenture tempted with

the motions of impatience; if thou then retire thy thoughts, and ponder with thy ſelfe attentiuely, thou ſhalt feele that they beate continually againſt the ſuperiour will, to make it yeelde and encline vnto them.

In this thou muſt exerciſe thy ſelfe with redoubled feruor, oppoſing thy ſelfe to euery motion, ſo that thy will do not conſent, nor euer giue ouer this fight, vntill thou ſee that thy enemie as wearie, and dead, render himſelfe vanquiſhed,

But thou muſt vnderſtand that whē the diuel perceiueth that wee couragiouſly oppoſe our ſelues againſt the motions of any paſsion, hee doth not only, not ſtirre them vp in

vs, but being ſtirred vp, he aſſayeth (for that time) to apeaſe them, for feare we ſhould by exerciſe, obtaine the habite of the contrary vertues.

Therefore vvhen thou findeſt thy ſelfe in peace, reduce ſometimes to thy memorye, & recal to battel, thoſe things which prouoked thee to impatience, and ſtirre them vp in ſuch maner that thou feele thy ſelfe mooued by them in thy ſenſitiue part, and then enforcing thy ſelfe to a newe combate, with often and forcible wills, repreſſe his motions.

And becauſe it often happeneth, that although we do put backe our enemies, (becauſe we know we do well, and do pleaſe God therein (yet notwithſtãding, for that we haue

them

them not in hatred, we are not out of danger, an other time to be ouercome of them.

Therfore thou muſt anew ſet vpon them, and beate them back from thee, not only with a repugning, but with a diſdainfull will, vntill thou haue made them odious and abhominable vnto thee.

Finally to adorne thy ſoule with habits of vertue, it ſuffiſeth not, that with theſe exerciſes aforeſaide thou reſiſt thy vitious paſsiõs, but it is neceſſary alſo thou bring forth acts of the vertues wholly contrary to theſe paſsions.

For example, if one giue thee occaſion of impatience, thou oughteſt not to content thy ſelf to driue away this paſſion, but moreouer thou muſt

deſire often, and very often to be prouoked in the ſame maner, and by the ſame perſon, enforcing thy ſelf to feele contentment in the former trauel, expecting and purpoſing to ſuffer as yet much greater.

And if the vertue be ſuch as do require it, thou muſt alſo put in practiſe the exteriour workes thereof, as in the example afore ſaide, vſing towardes him which moleſted thee, words of humilitie and loue, shewing thy ſelfe ready (according to thy eſtate) to do him any pleaſure or ſeruice.

And although theſe workes be accõpanied with ſo greate faintneſſe, and weakneſſe of ſpirit, that it ſhould ſeeme thou doſt the ſame wholly againſt thy will, yet thou muſt not in

any

any caſe, leaue it vndone: for although they bee neuer ſo feeble, yet they keepe thee firme in the Battel, and make thee way to obtaine the victorie.

And further thou muſt obſerue, that thou oughteſt not only in the aforeſaid maner, to fight againſt the great and effectuall wills of any vice, but alſo againſt the little, and ſlow motions of the ſame vice: for theſe are they which open the waye to the greater, which work afterwards in vs the vitious habites.

And of the litle care which ſome haue had to roote out theſe litle wils, after they haue ouercome the greater, it hath hapned vnto them afterward, that when they leaſt thought

vpon it, they haue found them ſelues aſſailed afreſh, and taken by the ſame ennemies, more forciblye then at the firſt.

And beſides this alſo, thou muſt mortifie and breake ſome times the wils of lawful things (ſo they be not neceſſarie) for by this means thou ſhalt make thy ſelf more ready to mortifie thy ſelfe in the other, and thou ſhalt doe a thing moſt grateful to thy Lord and Maſter.

Deare Daugther, I tell thee plainely, that if thou holde on in theſe exerciſes, with in ſhort time, by the helpe of GOD thou ſhalt profit much in ſpirite.

But if thou proceede in any other ſort, and with other ex-exerciſes, although they ſeeme excellent vnto thee, and of ſo

great

great taſte, that they hold thee alwaies as it were in a ſweete conference with Chriſt crucified: yet do not perſwade thy ſelfe, that thou ſhalt euer obtaine to be truly ſpirituall.

And thou muſt vnderſtand that as the vitious habites are cauſed by many and often actiõs of the ſuperior wil whileſt it giues place to the ſenſual appetites, ſo on the contrary part, the habites of the Euangelical vertues are gotten with conforming our ſelues more and more often, to the motions of the diuine will.

And as our will can neuer be vertuous and diuine, although it be earneſtly called vppon, & as it were fought withal by inſpirations and grace, from God whilſt it dooth not con-

ſent vnto it: So ſhall it neuer be vitious, & earthly, although it be much aſſayled by the inferiour part, vntill it giue place, and incline to the ſame.

VVhat wee ought to doe when the ſuperior VVill ſeemeth to be ouercome, and wholy ſuffocaced.

Chap. 8.

AND if ſometimes it ſeeme vnto thee that the ſuperior will is not able to preuaile againſt the inferior, becauſe thou doſt not feele in thy ſelf, a certaine effectuall will: notwithſtanding ſtand faſt, and giue not ouer the fight, for

thou muſt account thy ſelfe ſuperior, till manifeſtly thou doſt ſee thy ſelfe to haue yeelded. For our ſuperior will hauing no need of the concourſe of the inferior wills, although in theſe it findeth al maner of reſiſtance, yet may it notwithſtanding will, what thing ſoeuer, and as often, and for what end it ſeemeth beſt, howſoeuer nature in the meane time doth kicke and reſiſt; howſoeuer the world doth murmur, and the diuell rage.

And if theſe ennemies at ſometimes ſhould aſſaile thee and as it were hold thee faſt with ſo great violence, that thy will as it were ſuffocated or choaked (that I may ſo ſay) ſhould ſeeme to want breath, and haue no power to bring

forth any act of contrary wils; in this case, help thy selfe with thy tongue, and defend thee, saying: I yeeld not vnto thee, I will none of thee; after the maner of him, that hauing his enemie vpon his backe, holding him downe, not being able to thrust at him with the pummell of his sword. And as a man in this case will assay to leape backeward, that he may bee able to giue him the thrust, so thou being retired into the knowledge of thy self (that thou art nothing, & can doe nothing) and with confidence in God, that can doe all things, giue a blow to this enemie thy passion, with saying, helpe me O Lord, helpe mee my God, help me sweet Iesu, and blessed Mary.

Thou maieſt alſo when thy enemy giueth thee any time, helpe the weakeneſſe of thy will, with recourſe vnto thy vnderſtanding, conſidering diuers poynts; by conſideration whereof, it commeth to paſſe, that thy will may take breath, and force againſt her enemies, As for example, if thou be in any perſecution or trauell ſo aſſailed by impatience, that thy will may ſeeme not to be able, or at leaſt is not willing to beare it, thou ſhalt then helpe thy ſelfe with conſideration of theſe poynts following, or ſome other.

Firſt, thou ſhalt conſider whether thou haue not deſerued this perſecution, or trauel; and if thou deſeruedſt it, hauing giuen occaſion vnto the

ſame. then all equitie and iuſtice requires, that thou beare the blow which thy own proper hand hath giuen.

Secondly, but if thou find thy ſelf not to be faulty in that particular matter, then turne thy thoughts to thy other ſins, for the which God hath not as yet chaſtined thee, nor thou thy ſelfe as thou oughteſt haſt puniſhed them. And ſeeing that his mercy hath chaunged the puniſhment of them, that ſhould haue bin eternall, or at the leaſt temporall (but that of purgatory) with a little preſent affliction, it is thy part to receiue it willingly, and with thankeſgiuing.

Thirdly, and if perhappes thou ſhouldeſt ſeeme to thy ſelfe to haue doone great

pennance already, and to haue little offended the maieſtie of God, (which thing notwithſtanding thou neuer oughteſt to beleeue) thou muſt conſider, that into the kingdome of God none doe enter, but by the gate of denying themſelues, and of patience; for by this way alſo the Sonne of God did enter, and all his other members.

Fourthly, if thou couldſt enter by any other way, yet for the lawe of loue, thou oughteſt not to deſire it, ſeeing that the Sonne of God himſelfe with all his followers are entred by the waye of thornes and croſſes.

Laſtly, remember that the greateſt and principall conſi-

deration whiche thou art to vſe, not onely in this, but in euerye other occaſion to giue force vnto thy will, is this: that thou turne thy thoughtes to the delight and contentmēt which almightie God (for the loue he beareth thee) is to receiue by euery acte of vertue, and by the mortification of any ſenſuall appetite, which he ſhall perceiue thee to labour in, like a noble warriour, in the battle which thou haſt vnder taken for his ſake.

That Wee ought not to flie the occaſions of Combate.

Chap. 9.

BEſides all this that I haue ſaide vnto thee, which

thou

thou muſt doe, to cloath thy ſelf with the habits of vertue: I put thee in mind, that it is not conuenient, that thou flye from the occaſions of combat, which offer themſelues vnto thee; and that if thou wilt get the habites of any vertue, (as for example of patience) it is not good that thou ſhouldſt withdraw thy ſelfe from thoſe perſons, actions, or thoughts, that moue thee to impatience: wherefore thou oughteſt not to ſhunne, but rather, to hold as deare, the conuerſation of any perſon, that may be grieuous vnto thee, and conuerſing with him, thou oughteſt to keepe thy mind readie and prepared to ſuffer any troubleſome, or diſpleaſing thing whatſoeuer which may hap-

pen by him: for doing otherwiſe, thou ſhalt neuer accuſtome thy ſelfe to pacience.

So alſo in like maner if any worke be noyſome, and irkeſome to thee, either by it ſelfe, or for the perſon, that hath impoſed it vpon thee, or becauſe thou wouldſt doe ſome other thing, that doth better content thee: leaue not for all that to take it in hand, and to continue the ſame troubleſome actions although in doing of it thou ſhouldſt finde thy ſelfe vnquiet, and leauing it, thou ſhouldſt be in reſt: for thus thou ſhouldſt neuer learne to ſuffer, neither that ſhould be any true quiet, thy mind not being purged from paſsion.

The ſame thing I ſaye vnto thee concerning thoughts,

which ſometines diſturbe, and trouble thy mind, that they are not wholy to be driuen from thee, but rather to be eſteemd, forwith the trouble they bring thee, they accuſtome thee to ſuffer croſſes & contrarieties.

And he that shal otherwiſe inſtruct thee, doth rather teach thee to flie the griefe which thou feeleſt, then to obtain the vertue which thou deſireſt.

Yet notwithſtanding it is very true, that it behoueth a yong champion or a new beginner to behaue himſelfe, and skirmishe in theſe aforeſaide occaſions, with warineſſe and dexteritie, ſometimes to encounter them, ſometimes to giue grounde, according as more or leſſe he hath obtained the habite of vertue.

But for all this he must neuer quite turne his backe from the fight, and flie in such sort that he seeke wholy to forsake all trouble and irkesomenesse, for hee which at that time should saue himselfe, being at another time assailed, should not haue then in his neede, wherewith to defend himselfe from the blowes of impatience, vnto the which he should lie open, with great daunger whē they doe fall vppon him, because he should not bee armed, and strengthened with the habits of the contrary vertue These admonitions serue not in carnall vices, of the which (as I haue saide) I will intreate by themselues.

Of the manner how to reſiſt the ſodaine motions of Paſsions.

Chap. 10.

HE that is not yet accuſtomed to beate backe the ſuddaine blowes of iniuries, or other contrarie things, to obtaine the vſe thereof, muſt accuſtome himſelfe to foreſee them, and to wish them oftentimes, expecting them with a prepared mind.

The maner to foreſee them is, that thine owne ſtate and condition beeing weighed, thou conſider alſo the perſons and the places, where and with whō thou art to deale, wherby thou mayeſt eaſily conie-

cture

cture that which may happen vnto thee.

And if any other aduerſe, or contrary thing not thought vpon before doe happen vnto thee, beſides the help which thou haſt already gained, by preparing thy mind for other things which thou didſt foreſee, thou maiſt further help thy ſelfe with this other manner.

Sodainely when thou beginneſt to feele the firſt touches of an iniurie, or other painefull thing, bee readie to enforce thy ſelfe, to lift vp thy mind to God, conſidering his ineffable bountie, and loue toward thee, with which he ſendeth this aduerſitie, to the end that thou ſuffering it for his loue, may drawe more neare

and

and be vnited vnto him: and ſeeing how much it delighteth him, that thou ſuffer it, turne thee afterwards to thy ſelfe, in maner of reprehenſion, ſaying in thy mind: ah why wilt thou not ſuffer this croſſe? which not theſe, or thoſe men, but thy heauenly father moſt louingly doth ſend thee. Afterwardes returne to the croſſe, and imbrace it with the greateſt pacience, and ioy that thou canſt.

And if in the beginning thy paſsion ſo preuaile in thee, that thou canſt noſt lift vp thy heart vnto God, but shouldſt remaine wounded, ſeeke notwithſtanding this, to do it as if thou hadſt not bin ſtrooken. But for a true and effectuall remedie againſt theſe ſodaine motiõs, thou art to take away

in time, the cauſe from whence they proceede.

For example, if by the affection which thou haſt to any thing thou doſt finde, that when thou art troubled in the ſame, thou art wont to fall into ſome ſodain alteratiō of mind, the maner to prouide for that in time, is, that thou accuſtome thy ſelfe to take away the affection vnto the ſame, but if the alteration proceede not of the thing, but of the perſon in whom (becauſe thou haſt no liking of him) euery little action doth grieue & moue thee, the remedie is, that thou enforce thy ſelfe to loue the ſame perſon, and to hold him deare.

Of the manner how to fight against the ſinne of the fleſh.

Chap 11.

AGainſt this vice thou muſt fight with particular, and different meanes, from other vices, therfore thou muſt haue regard vnto three times, that is to ſay: before we be tempted; when we are tempted; and after that the temptation is paſt.

Before the temptation, thou muſt not ſtriue with the vice of the fleſhe, but with the cauſes from which it proceedes.

Firſt, therfore thou muſt flie all conuerſation (which is

neuer ſo little daungerous) as much as thou canſt, enforcing thee not to ſhew familiarity, or vtter words of affection, but with a modeſt grauitie, briefly to deale ſo farre as neceſsitie ſhall require.

Secondly thou muſt flie idleneſſe, and keepe thy ſelfe euer buſied with thoughtes and workes, agreable to thy vocation.

Thirdly, neuer reſiſt the will of thy ſuperiors, but yeeld thy ſelfe, and execute al things which they ſhall commaund thee.

Fourthly, neuer iudge raſhly of thy neighbour eſpecially concerning this vice; but if he ſhould apparently fal, yet haue compaſsiō vpon him, diſdaine him not, deſpiſe him not, but

gather the fruite of humilitie, debaſe thy ſelf euen vnto duſt and tremble at thy ſelfe, and with prayer draw nearer vnto God: for if thou be ready to iudge and deſpiſe others, God will correct thee, (but to thy coſt) by permitting thee to fall into the ſame vice, that by this meanes thou maiſt know thy pride, and beeing humbled, thou maiſt procure remedie, both to this and that, or if thou do not fal, it may neuertheleſſe be doubted in what ſtate thou ſtandeſt.

Fiftly and laſt, thou ſhalt take heed that when thou feeleſt aboundance of ſpirituall delights, thou doe not vainely pleaſe thyſelfe: as being perſwaded that thou art worthy of ſome account, and that thy

enemies are no more to assaile thee.

In the time of temptation consider first, whether it proceede of an externall, or internall cause: externall I meane the conuersation and speeches which may stirre vp this vice: and the remedie thereof is, to flie, as I said before.

The inward cause proceedeth, either of the lustinesse of body, or of the thoughts of the mind, which come by our euil habites, or by sugestion of the diuell.

Touching the first, it is needeful to chastice the body, with fasting, and disciplines, haire cloth, watchings, and otherlike austerity, as discretion & obediēce shall appoint thee.

Concerning thy thoughts,

the remedies are, Meditation, Prayer, and to occupy thy ſelfe in ſundrie exerciſes, conuenient for thy eſtate.

I wold not haue thy meditation to be about certain points, which many bookes ſet forth for remedie of this temptation, which are to conſider the vileneſſe of ſuch a vice, the inſatiableneſſe, the diſcontentment, the punishment, the daungers, the conſuming of goods, of life, of honor, and eternall damnation: for that is not alwayes a ſecure meane to ouercome the temptation; the true remedy being to flie altogither, not onely from thoſe thoughts themſelues, but alſo from euery thing that repreſents thoſe thoughts, although they bee neuer ſo contrarie to

the ſame, for although the vnderſtanding by one way driue them away, yet by another it giueth occaſion and danger of delight.

Therefore thy meditation for this matter ought to be vpon the life and paſsion of our Sauiour. And if in this meditation againſt thy will, theſe thoughts come into thy mind, and more then they are wonte moleſt thee (as aſſuredly ſomtimes it will happen) yet for all that bee not diſcouraged, nor leaue thy meditation, no not to reſiſt them: turne not thy ſelfe in any ſort to thē, but follow thy meditation attentiuely, noteſteeming at al thoſe thoughts, as if they were not thine, this is the true way to reſiſt them, although thou ſhoul-

deſt

deſt find thy ſelfe continually aſſaulted with them; neither euer diſpute with ſuch thoghts whether thou haue conſented to them or no, for this is a deceit of the diuell, vnder pretence of good, eſpecially ſeeing that when thou art quiet afterward, and by the counſell of thy ſpirituall Father thou maiſt know the truth. And ſee that alwayes thou faithfully diſcouer to thy ghoſtly father euery thought, and be not aſhamed; for if againſt al our enemies we had need of humilitie to ouercome them, in this we haue more need, then in any other whatſoeuer.

Concerning praier for this effect, it muſt be made with often lifting vppe thy mind to God, with virtuall intentiõ to

pray for victory ouer this vice, without turning thy thought actually vnto it, for that is a dangerous thing: and let this ſuffize thee now for thy defence in the time of temptation.

That which thou haſt to doe when the temptation is paſt, is this, although thou ſeeme neuer ſo free, and ſecure to thy ſelfe · yet that thou ſtand aloofe, and not ſo much as euer remēber thoſe obiects which did cauſe the temptation, although for ſome reſpects of vertue, or ſome other good, thou feele thy ſelfe moued to doe otherwiſe, for this is a deceit of our vitious nature, and a ſnare of the diuell.

Of the manner how to fight against Negligence.

Chap. 12.

THat thou mayſt not fall into this moſt dangerous vice, thou muſt endeuor by all meanes poſsible to aunſwere with readineſſe of mind, euery good inſpiration, and to flie all earthly conſolation, curioſitie, and ſuperfluous buſineſſe, that appertaine not to thy eſtate.

And becauſe to him that is fallen into negligence, there is no better remedie, then to doe ſome good worke, & the negligent man loatheth euery worke though neuer ſo good, hauing his eie more vpon the

labor that it sheweth, then vpon the good which it promiseth: therefore it is needeful to discouer this good vnto him, making him to vnderstande, that one only lifting vp of the mind to god, and one bowing of the knee to the earth, for his honour is more worth then all the treasures in the world. But the labor that is to be taken, in so doing, must be hid in such sort, that it seeme to be lesse then it is.

Thy exercise peraduenture requireth a whole howre of prayer, and to thy negligence this seemes too much. Therfore with this behooueful and sweete deceipt, as it were perswading thy selfe that halfe a quarter of an hower is inough, settle thy self to praier for this

little ſpace of time.

For in this maner breaking thy negligence, thou mayſt with facilitie hold on another halfe a quarter, and thus continue from ſpace to ſpace. And if in this alſo thou ſhouldeſt find difficultie, leaue off for a while thy exerciſe that it irke thee not too much, but after a litle ſpace returne to it againe.

Of the gouernement of the ſenſes.

Chap. 13.

THy ſences (by the which our enemies are wont to enter) thou ſhalt keepe in ſuch ſort, that they may be gates, by the which thy God may enter in. When thou doſt perceiue

thy ſelfe too much buſied about any creature, penetrate with the internall eye of thy ſoule, to thy God hidden therein, who giueth being to the ſame thing, and then returne to thy ſelfe, & behold him alſo in thee, in like maner, to whō thou mayſt ſay in this ſort.

Thou art (my Lord) preſent indeede, more vnto me, then I am to my ſelfe, and I vngratefull and careleſſe, thinke not on thee, loue thee not, honor thee not. Or againe; ſome other times thou maiſt lift vppe thy vnderſtanding to the incomprehenſible greatnes, and perfection of the ſame Lord, reioycing in thy ſelfe to ſee in him ſo great good as he poſſeſſeth, yea more then if it were thine owne, feeling grea-

ter ioy that he is incomprehenſible, then if he did not exceed thy capacitie. And when thou ſeeſt in any reaſonable creatures, power, wiſedome, bountie, iuſtice, and other perfections, lift vp thy ſelfe to God and ſay in thy mind: behold the litle riuers of the fountaine vncreated, and of the infinite ſea of all goodneſſe.

And feeling thy ſelfe to be delighted with the beautie of creatures, quickly paſſe from that with thy thought to the ſupernall beautie, and delighting thy ſelfe onely in it, thou ſhalt ſay: when ſhall I my Sauior take onely in thee all my delight?

By another manner, thou maiſt auoide this delectation: aſſoone as thou perceiueſt thy

ſelfe

ſelfe to be drawn with any delectable obiect, behold with thyne vnderſtanding, that vnder this delight, there lieth the infernall ſerpent, prepared to kill thee, or at the leaſt to wound thee, againſt whom thou ſhalſt thus ſay: ah thou curſed ſerpẽt, howſecretly doſt thou lie in wait to venom me?

Afterward thy mind being lifted vp to God, thou ſhalt ſay: Bleſſed be my Lord God which hath diſcouered my enemie which did lye in waite to kill me.

In the variety of diuers other accidents, thou mayeſt thus exerciſe thy ſelfe, when, for example, thou art oppreſſed with ſorrowe, or doeſt ſuffer heate, cold, or any other painfull thing, thou ſhalt lift vp thy

mind to that eternal wil, whos pleaſure it is, that thou in ſuch meaſure, and at ſuch a time doe feele that diſcommoditie: wherefore full of ioye thou ſhalt ſay in thy heart: behold in me the accomplishment of the diuine will, which from the beginning thou haſt diſpoſed that I, in ſuch time, and with ſuch meaſure should receiue and ſuffer this; and the ſame thou shalt doe in other accidēts alſo: as when the ſkies are filled with clowdes, when it raineth, is windie or fair weather, & in any other thing that doth happen vnto thee And that euen when thou dooeſt reade, thou maiſt keepe our Lord in thy preſence, aſcend wyth thy thought to him, and beholde him vnder thoſe

words, & receue them as from his diuine mouth, and when any good thought cōmeth to thy mind, ſodainely turne thy ſelfe to God, and with lowly reuerence adore him, acknowledging that thoughte to proceede from his diuine maieſtie, and thanke him for it.

Of the order how to fight against thy enemies.

Chap. 14.

THe order to fight againſt thy paſsions, is, that thou enter into thy heart, and there ſearch with diligent examination, with what paſsions thou art principally poſſeſt, & with what other thoughts, and affe-

ctions, thou art in conflict, and afterwards bend thy weapons againſt that enemie that then actually, and more neare doth moleſt thee: but in time of tranquilitie thou muſt attend to expugne that whiche is wont more to indomage thee, and is more diſpleaſing in the eies of our ſupreme Lord.

VVhat We ought to doe When Wee are Wounded.

Chap. 15.

VVHē thou art fallē into any defect through frailtie, & weakneſſe, & ſometime euen through will, & malice, turne thee ſodainly vnto God, with the knowledge and hatred of thy ſelfe, ſaying with

an inflamed heart vnto him: beholde O my Lorde I haue done euen like my ſelfe, neither can I expect any other thing of my ſelfe then to fall: O my Lord and Sauior I am ſory for it, neither could I haue ſtayed my ſelf here, if the hand of thy goodneſſe had not ſtayed me, for the which I yeeld thee humble thanks: do thou O Lord like vnto thy ſelf, permit me not to liue in thy diſgrace, neither that I may any more offend thee. And this beeing ended, do not turne thee to thinke, whether God haue forgiuen thee or no? for ſo to do is pride, diſquietneſſe of mind, loſſe of time, and a ſnare of the diuell.

Therefore leauing thy ſelfe freely in the hand of the diuine

pietie, continue thy exerciſe, as though thou hadſt not fallen. And if thou happen to fall many times a day, and be wounded do the ſame things with no leſſe truſt the ſecond, the third, and alſo the laſt time then the firſt.

This exerciſe by ſo much diſpleaſeth the deuill, by how much he ſeeth it pleaſeth God, and therefore he doth hold vs at it were faſt bound, and ſeeketh to make vs ſo very ſlothfull, that many times we leaue to doe it. Therefore by how much thou findeſt the greater difficultie in this, by ſo much thou oughtſt, to vſe the greater violence, renewing it more then one time in one fall.

And if yet after the fall thou find thy ſelfe diſquieted, a-

ſhamed, and diſcomforted: the firſt thing that thou muſt doe, is, that thou recouer the peace and tranquilitie of hart, and being ſo quieted and ſet in peace turne thy ſelfe then afterwards to God; for that diſquietneſſe that vſeth to remain after ſinne committed, hath not for the obiecte, the offending of God, and the loue of him, but thy owne priuate loſſe and dammage.

The waye to recouer this peace, is; that thou forget thy ſelfe to haue fallen, and ſettle thy ſelf to conſider the ineffable bountie of God, and how he deſireth, to vnite himſelfe to thee, & make thee bleſſed in his eternall ioy. And after that with this or ſuch like cõſideration, thou haſt ſetled thy

mind: thou ſhalt turne thy ſelf to thy fall, doing as I taught thee before, and at the time of thy going to cõfeſsiõs (which ſhould be often) call then to mind all thy defects, and open thẽ ſincerely to thy confeſſor.

That a man ſhould alwaies keepe himſelfe in peace.

Chap. 16.

THat thou mayſt keepe thy hart, on euery ſide free frõ diſturbance, and diſquietnes, thou muſt euer haue a guard watching, the which aſſoone as it diſcouers any thing, that may diſturbe, or diſquiet the heart, ſodainely may giue thee warning, to the ẽd thou maiſt take thy weapõs to defẽd thee.

And

And if it happen (as many times and to too often it doth) that thou be troubled or disquieted, by any sodain assault, al other things set aside, attend first of al to pacifie thy mind, for that beeing quiet, many things are done, and wel done and without this, thou canst not do any thing of any value; besides that, thou dost thereby lye opē to the blowes of thine enemies,

The diuell dooth so much feare this peace (as a place where God doth dwell for to woorke therein woonders) that oftentimes with the bāners or ensignes of a friend he attempteth to deceiue vs with inspirations, which in apparance are good, stirring vp in vs sundry good desires. The

deceit

deceit whereof is knowne by the effects, becauſe they take frō vs the peace of our harts.

Therefore whē thy ſcowte-watch giues thee a ſign of any new deſire, let it not enter in, but free from any proprietie, or wil of thine owne preſent it vnto God, confeſsing thy blindneſſe, and ignorance, and earneſtly beſeeche him, that with his light he make thee ſee whether it come from him, or from the earth. And ſee that thou mortifie, the proneneſſe of thy nature, before thou put in practiſe thy deſire, yea although it ſhould be from God; for that the worke following ſuch a mortification, ſhall be more gratefull vnto him, then if it ſhould be done with the greedines of nature; and ſome

time the mortification will more pleaſe him, then the worke it ſelfe.

And thus abandoning the deſires not good, or not imbracing the good, til firſt thou haue repreſſed thy naturall motions, thou ſhalt be ſure to keepe in peace, and in ſecuritie the caſtle of thy hart; which alſo is needfull, that thou keep frõ certaine inward reprehenſions againſt thy ſelfe, which ſometimes are of the deuill: although (becauſe they accuſe thee of ſome defect) they ſeem to come from God; by their fruites thou ſhalt know from whence they do proceede. If they make thee humble, keep thee peaceable, and diligent in doing good, and take not from thee thy confidence in God,

receiue

receiue them as from God: but if they confound thee, and make thee ful of puſilanimity, diſtruſtfull, and ſlow to doe good, and eſpecially in that that thou art reprehended in: holde thee aſſured, that they come from the aduerſarie, and therefore giue no eare vnto them, but continue thy exerciſe.

How the diuell by way of purpoſes ſeekes to hinder ſometimes the obtaining of vertue.

Chap. 17.

WIth another falſe bait alſo the diuell aſſaieth to deceiue vs, and that is with

deſires and purpoſes which wee make againſt thoſe enemies, which be a farre off, and more ſtronger : leauing to fight againſt thoſe which are neare vnto vs: with the which it is needfull for vs actually to fight for to ouercome our ſelues.

Hence ariſe greate loſſes, becauſe wee are contiually wounded, and we care not for the hurt, and eſteeming ſuch purpoſes as if they were facts; vainely we become prowde; whereupon at that very time, when we will not ſo much as beare one croſſe word: we ſpend forſooth, long meditations, in purpoſing to ſuſtaine for the loue of God, euen the paines of purgatorie.

And becauſe in this the in-

ferior part feeleth no repugnance, (as of a thing a far off) therefore we poore wretches, perſwade our ſelues, to be in the degree of thoſe that paciently, and actually ſuſtaine great things. Thou therefore to auoide this deceit, purpoſe and fight with thoſe enemies, that are at hand, and really make warre againſt thee: for by this thou ſhalt plainly perceiue, if thy purpoſes be true or falſe, ſtrong or weake: but againſt thoſe enemies which are not wont to trouble thee; I counſell thee not to wage battell, except thou probably perceiue, that within a ſhorte time after they are for to aſſaile thee: for that thou maiſt find thy ſelfe more ſtrong at that time, it is lawfull to pur-

poſe before: but for all that do not iudge thy purpoſes, as facts, if for ſome time indeede thou haſt not bin exerciſed in the workes of that vertue. For in this caſe although we cannot ouercome ſome little defects which at ſometimes (for the humble acknowledging of our ſelues) our Sauior leaueth vnto vs, yet then it is lawfull notwithſtanding to make purpoſes of more high degrees of perfection. But when in ſmal things we are careleſſe, not vſing any force to ouercome our ſelues in the ſame, the purpoſes of greater things is no other, but vanitie, and preſumption, and deceit of the deuill.

In What maner the diuell enforceth himſelfe to remoue vs from the Way of vertue.

Chap. 18.

THe malignant ennemie vſeth another deceit againſt vs, whilſt he ſeeketh to remooue vs from the way of vertue. A perſon findeth himſelfe ſicke, and ſeeketh with patience to ſupport the infirmitie: the aduerſarie ſeeing that if he continue thus, he ſhal get the habite of pacience, oppoſeth himſelf, and propoſeth vnto him a deſire to do this or that other good deede: and ſuggeſteth vnto him, that if he were in health he might better

ſerue God, helpe himſelfe, and ſome others: and by little and little he continues heating this deſire in him, in ſuch ſort, that he maketh him vnquiet, becauſe he cannot attend to thoſe good exerciſes: and by how much more the deſire is kindled, by ſo much more the diſquietneſſe is made greater, in ſuch ſort, that before he be aware thereof, he is brought to be impaciēt, with his infirmitie: not as an infirmitie, but as an impediment to do thoſe workes, which vnquietly he deſired; when afterwards he hath broght him to this point, the craftie enemie by a ſubtill meane, taketh from his mind the intentiō of the diuine ſeruice, and leaues him the naked deſire to deliuer himſelf, from

the infirmitie. And becauſe this ſucceedeth not as hee would, he becommeth altogither vnquiet, and impacient, & thus leauing vertue, falleth into vice.

The remedy of this is, when thou findeſt thy ſelfe in any troubleſome eſtate, to beware thou giue no place in thy ſelf to the deſires of what good ſo euer which at that time (thou being not able to performe them) may happen to diſquiet thee for thy great profit. To this purpoſe I doe aduertiſe thee, that it often happeneth that a man being impacient, for the paine or trouble that doth grieue him, couereth the vice of his impatience, vnder the pretence of zeale of ſome good, wherevpon the ſicke

man, impatient for his diſeaſe, ſaith that his impatience is not for the paine of ſicknes, but becauſe he hath bin the cauſe of it, or becauſe hee is a trouble or hinderaunce to others, or becauſe hee cannot attend to ſundrie exerciſes and workes of the ſpirit.

Thus the ambitious man that cannot obtain his deſired dignity, whilſt he complaines of others, doth couer himſelfe with ſaying, that this doth not grieue him, for himſelf, but for his family, for his friends, or for other reſpects. And that theſe men doe deceiue themſelues, it is moſt apparant, becauſe they are not troubled, nor diſquieted, when by ſome other means, or by other perſons, the ſame effects come to

paſſe

paſſe, whieh they ſeemed to miſlike, vnder the which they couered the vice, and their defect. For example, thou ſayſt that thy diſeaſe doth not trouble thee for thy ſelfe, but for the irkſomneſſe of them that ſerue thee, notwithſtanding, if thoſe ſame perſons, feele the ſame irkſomneſſe, through the infirmity of others, thou takeſt no thought for it, whereby it is euident, that the whole root of thy ſorrow was in thee, and for thy ſelfe onely, and not for others; and this may be ſaid in euery like thing.

Moreouer I aduertiſe thee, that if thou patiently beare any croſſe, thou neuer ſuffer thy ſelf to be ouertaken with a deſire to lay it away; becauſe from this proceed two loſſes:

th'one is, that if this desire take not away thy patience at that time, yet by litle & litle, it wil dispose thee to impatience. The other is, that thou shalt merit only then for that small time wherein thou suffereſt: whereas if that thou hadſt not desired thy deliuerance, but hadſt fully resigned thy selfe vnto God, although in effect thy suffering, had bin but for one houre onely: thy Sauior would haue acknowledged it, for a seruice of a long time.

Wherefore in this, and in euery other thing, let it be a generall rule, alwaies to keepe thy desire so spoiled of euery other obiect, that onely thou desire alwaies and in al things purely and simply, the diuine pleasure. For in this manner

ſeeing that nothing can happen to thee (without thy own fault) but as much as pleaſeth the diuine Maieſtye, thou ſhalt neuer be afflicted, nor troubled, nor ſhalt leaue off the way of perfection. And the lawful means which ſome times are needefull to be vſed, to deliuer thy ſelfe from hurtfull things, let them not be with touch of ſelfe-loue, becauſe thou loueſt to be deliuered, but becauſe it pleaſeth God, that thou vſe them.

In what sort our aduersarie endeuoureth with al his force, that the vertues which we haue obtained, may be an occasion of our ruine.

Chap. 19.

THe craftie and malignant serpent dooth not faile to tempt vs also in the vertues which we haue obtained, that they may be the occasions of our ruine, whileſt we delighting in them, come to be lifted vp on high, to fall afterwardes into the vice of pride. But to auoyde this danger, fight alwayes, ſitting in the plaine and ſure field of a true & profound knowledge of thy ſelfe, that

thou art nothing, knoweſt nothing, thou canſt do nothing, and thou haſt no other thing of thy ſelfe, but eternall damnation.

And be alwayes watchfull, and vigilant that thou keep aloofe off, euery thought that bringeth thee frō this knowledge; for the ſame being thy enemy, if it cannot kill thee, at leaſt it will leaue thee wounded: and that thou mayeſt the better comprehend the trueth of this, marke wel this caſe following. As oft as thou ſhalt turne thee to the conſideration of thy ſelfe, alwayes conſider thy ſelfe with that which is thine, & not with that that is of God, & of his grace, & eſteeme thy ſelfe ſuch, as with thine thou doeſt finde thee to be.

If thou consider the time, before thou wast, thou shalt see, that in all that eternitie, thou wast a meere nothing, & that thou didst not worke, or couldest woorke any thing to deserue thy being In this time after sithence that by the only goodnesse of God thou hast thy being, leauing to god that which is his: (that is, the continuall gouernemēts, with the which he ruleth & preserueth thee) with that which thou hast of thy selfe, what other thing art thou, but in like manner a nothing? It is therefore euident, that in this thy first naturall being, standing with thine owne, thou hast not in any respect reason to esteeme thy selfe, or to desire to bee esteemed of others.

Now

Now as concerning thy good eſtate of grace, and abilitie to doe good things; thy nature ſpoyled of Gods diuine help, what good thing could it euer doe of it ſelfe? where alſo conſidering thy many euills paſt, and more then that, the multitude of other euills, which euen vntill this time thou hadſt continued to worke, if God of his great mercie had not ſtayed thee: thou ſhalt find, that thy iniquities, not onely by the multiplication of daies, and yeares, but alſo by the number of thy actions, and of thy euill inclinations, ſhould haue bin multiplied infinitly, inſomuch that thou wouldſt haue become like another infernall Lucifer: whereupon if thou

be not willing to ſteale that to thy ſelfe, which is due vnto God, but rather chooſing to reſt within the compaſſe of thine owne, thou oughteſt to account thy ſelfe euery daye worſe then other.

But note well that this iudgement of thine, be accompanied with iuſtice, for otherwiſe it would be no ſmal loſſe vnto thee: for if in this knowledge thou doe excell ſome other (who through his blindneſſe doth account himſelf ſomewhat worth, & deſireth ſo to be reputedof others) thou not withſtanding doeſt looſe very much, and doſt make thy ſelfe worſe then he: if notwithſtanding thy knowledge thou wilt be had in eſtimatiõ ofmen, & vſed for ſuch

as thou knoweſt thou art not; if therefore thou wilt that the acknowledging of thy baſenes, & wickednes be true, and that it may make thee beloued of God, it is needefull that thou not only acknowledge thy ſelf wicked and vile, but as ſuch a one to vſe thy ſelfe, and wil, in like manner to be alſo vſed of others.

And if it happen at anye time for ſome good, that God vouchſafe to worke by thee, that thou be loued as good, or be prayſed of others, abide in thy ſelfe well collected, and moue not one whit from the aforeſayd veritie and iuſtice, and turne thy ſelfe firſt vnto God, ſaying this in thy heart: let it not pleaſe thee (O Lord) that I ſteale from thy good-

neſſe.

neſſe. And afterwards turning thy thoughts to him that praiſed thee, ſay within thy ſelfe: whence doth it proceede that this man thinketh me good if my God be only truly good? and if thou doe thus, and giue vnto God that which is his, he will no doubt diſpoſe thee vnto greater grace.

That in the ſpirituall Battel We ought neuer to perſWade our ſelues to haue ouercome our enemies, but alWaies as neW combatans to reneW our exerciſes.

Chap. 20.

I Aduertiſe thee O Daughter that thou neuer perſwade thy ſelfe to haue gotten the

victorie ouer any paſsion, although a long time thou doe not feele in thy ſelfe the motions of the ſame. But as a new warrior, and as a child newly borne for to fight: renew alwaies thy exerciſes, as at the firſt, as if thou hadſt done hitherto nothing And ſo much the rather for if we behold the perfection, whereunto God doth call vs, although we haue gone neuer ſo farre in the way of vertue, yet ſhal we not dare to ſay that we are ſo much as entred into the firſt bounds therof: beſides that, ſometimes that is a vice, which through ſome ſecrete pride ſeemeth vnto vs a vertue.

Of Prayer.

Chap. 21.

VVE haue by the helpe of god, treated of the diſtruſt of our ſelues, of confidence in God, and of exerciſe: which are three neceſſary things to obtaine the victorie of our paſsions. Now followeth the fourth, that is, *Prayer*, the onely and potent meane to obtaine any good thing, from the moſt bountifull hand of our Lord and Sauior. And to the end that this thy praier, may be effectuall and acceptable to God, it is needful that thou haue the habite of theſe things following.

Firſt, that there be in thy

hart an earneſt deſire to ſerue God, in ſuch manner as may beſt pleaſe him.

Secondly, a liuely faith, that God will giue thee all that is needful for his ſeruice, and thy good.

Thirdly, that thou goe to prayer with intention to will the will of God, and not thine, as wel in demanding, as in obtaining that which thou doſt demaund, that is to ſay; that thou be moued to praier, becauſe God doth will it, and that thou deſire to be heard, becauſe thou hopeſt that ſuch is his will. And finally, thy intention ought to be, to ioyne thy will with the will of God, and not to draw the will of God vnto thine.

Fourthly and laſtly, thou

muſt ioyne with prayer the exerciſe, to ouercome thy ſelf in ſuch ſort, that the one as in a circle may follow the other: for otherwiſe to demand any vertue, and not to labor by all meanes poſsible to obtaine it, ſhuld be rather to tempt God then otherwſe. After thy praier haue a firme and liuely truſt in God, that through his boũtie he will grant thee the grace demaunded, or ſome other greater, or both to gether: although it should be ſlow in cõming, & that thou ſhouldſt ſee the contrary ſignes, neither for all this thou oughteſt to leaue off thy prayer, and confidence.

Yea the more thou ſeemeſt to be put backe, the more doe thou humble thy ſelf in thine

owne ſight, and in creaſe thy faith in God, the which continuing firme and ſtedfaſt, by how much it is the more tried, by ſo much it is more deare vnto God. And afterwarde render alwaies thankes vnto God, acknowledging him for good, wiſe, and louing nothing the leſſe euen whē thou doubteſt that thou arte not heard, as if thou hadſt indeede obtained the grace requeſted, remaining ſtable and ioyfull in euery euent, in the humble ſubmiſsion vnto his infallible prouidence.

VVhat

VVhat thing mentall Prayer is, and in what ſorte it is to bee made.

Chap. 22.

MEntall Prayer is a lifting vp of the mind vnto God with a virtuall, or actuall demanding of that which is deſired.

By virtuall is ment, when the mind is lifted vp to God, to obtaine any grace, ſhewing vnto him our needes without any words, or diſcourſe; as when I lift vp my mind vnto God, and there in his preſence acknowledge my vnableneſſe to doe any thing that is good, and to defend my ſelfe from euill: and this acknowledging

thus made before God, is a prayer virtually demaunding that which is needful vnto me.

There is alſo another kind of virtual mental praier, more reſtrained, that is made with a ſimple looke of the mind vnto God, which is no other thing, but a quiet remembrance and demaund of that grace, which in former time we haue demaunded. And ſee that thou learne well this ſort of praier, & make it familiar vnto thee, becauſe (as experience will teach thee) it is a weapon which eaſily in euery occaſion and place, thou mayſt haue ready at hand, and it is of great value, and helpe vnto thee.

The actuall demaund is made, whē with words of the mind grace is asked, in this or

in the like manner; my Lord my God, for thy glorie giue me this grace or benefit. Or thus: O Lord I do beleeue that it is thy pleaſure that I demãd this vertue of thee; accompliſh in me this thy diuine pleaſure. And ſometime thou ſhalt preſent before his maieſtie the enemie which fighteth with thee, & with al thy weakeneſs to reſiſt him, ſaying: behould O Lord thy creatur, the workmanſhip of thy hands, redeemed with thy precious bloud, behold alſo thy enemy and mine, who aſſaieth to take me from thee, & to deuour me. To thee O Sauior I runn, in thee only I truſt, thou ſeeſt my weaknes to reſiſt, & my prõptneſſe voluntarily to yeeld vnto him if I want thy helpe.

Of Prayer by the Way of Meditation.

Chap. 23.

IF thou wilt pray for a certaine ſpace of time, as halfe an houre, an houre, or more; thou ſhalt ioyne to thy praier, the meditation of the life and paſsion of Chriſt, applying alwayes his actions to that vertue, which thou moſt deſireſt: as for example; thou deſireſt to obtaine the grace and vertue of patience, and peraduenture thou wilt meditate vpon ſome pointes of the paſsion, how our Lord was ſpoiled of his garments, and rent off moſt cruelly, his ſacred fleſh cleauing faſt vnto them: how the

crowne of thorne was taken from his head, and afterwards faſtned vpon the ſame again: how he was nailed vpon the croſſe: how hanging vpon the hard wood, he was lifted vp on high, with extreame griefe of all his moſt ſacred wounds, and of all his moſt holy body, and other points: to which points firſt of al thou ſhalt apply thy ſences to feele the pain, which in euery [illegible], and in the whole togither, our Lord did feele.

From hence thou ſhalt paſſe to his moſt ſacred ſoule, penetrating, as much as thou canſt, the patience and meekenes, with the which he ſuffred ſo great afflictions; neuer ſatiſfied for all that, in his great deſire of ſuffering, for the honor

of his father, and our benefit, greater and more cruell torments. Behold him afterwards how he is inflamed with a feruent desire, that thou resolue willingly to suffer thy prsent trauaile: and how he turneth to his father, and prayeth for thee, that he will vouchsafe to giue thee grace, to suffer patiently the crosse that then thou doost sustaine, and what other thing whatsoeuer. Afterwards bending thy will many times to resolue to suffer, turne thy mind to God the Father, and demaund of him the vertue of patience, by the same praier of his deare Sonne for thee.

Of another maner of Prayer by Way of Meditation.

Chap. 24.

THou mayſt alſo pray and meditate in an other maner, and that is this: whē thou ſhalt haue conſidered attentiuely the paſsions, & the trauailes which thy Sauiour did ſuffer, and hauing applied thy ſences to feele them, and with thy thought penetrated the promptnes of mind, wherwith he did ſuffer; from the greatneſſe of his ſorrow, and of his patience, thou ſhalt proceed to two other conſiderations: th'one of the merit of the ſame Sauior: th'other of the cōtentment of the eternall Father,

that he took in the perfect obedience of his Sonne. The which two things represented to the same Father: in their vertue thou shalt demand the grace that thou desirest. And this like demaund, thou mayst make, not only in euery mystery, but also in euery particular internall, or externall action, which the same our Lord at any time performed.

Of an other manner of prayer by meanes of the B. Virgin.

Chap. 25.

BEsides the aforesaid, there is another way to meditate & pray by means of the most

holy mother of our Lord: turning firſt thy mind to the Father, afterwards to the Sonne, and laſt of all, to the ſaide glorious Virgine. Touching the Father, conſider two things, & preſent them before him, that is, the delights which from the beginning he of himſelfe did take in her, euen before ſhee had her being in this worlde: and in hir vertues and actions after ſhee was brought foorth into the world.

About the delightes thou ſhalt thus meditate, lift vp thy ſelfe on high with thy thought aboue al time, and aboue euery creature, and being entred into the verye eternitie, and minde of God, conſider the delights and ioy that himſelfe did take in the virgin *Mary*, &

her

her perfections, and finding God amidſt theſe delights, by the vertue of them, ſecurely demaund grace and force to deſtroy thy enemies, and particularly, that ennemie which doth then aſſaile thee.

Proceeding afterwardes to the conſiderations of her ſo great and ſingular vertues and actions, ſometimes preſent vnto the ſight of the eternall Father, ſome of them particularly, ſometimes al of them together. And for theſe in like manner craue of this diuine goodnes, that which thou deſireſt. And concerning the Sonne, thou ſhalt offer to his ſight, that virginall wombe, which did beare him nine moneths, the reuerence with the which the tender Virgin after

his birth adored him, and did acknowledge him true man, and true God, her ſonne, and creator, the pitifull eyes wherwith she beheld him, ſo poore, the armes which embraced him, the kiſſes she gaue him, the milke wherwith she nourished him, the great trauelles and ſorrowes, that in his life, and at his death she ſuſtained for him. By vertue of which things, thou shalt vſe a ſweete violence to her beloued ſonne that he may heare thee. Turne thy ſelfe afterwardes to the B. Virgine, and put her in mind, how that by the eternall wiſedome and goodneſſe of God, she was choſen for mother of grace, and of pittie, and our aduocate, wherefore we haue not (next vnto hir bleſſed ſon)

more potent recourſe then vnto her. And moreouer bring into her minde, that veritie which of her is both knowne and written, that neuer anye hath faithfully called vpon hir to whom she hath not pitifully anſwered.

Finally, thou shalt laye before her the trauels of her only ſonne, beſeeching her, that to the glorye and content of him, they may take that effect in thee, for which they were ſuſtained.

How to meditate by meane of the Angells, and of a the B. Saints.

Chap. 26.

THe Aungells, and all the Saints in heauen may be

another potẽt meãs, the which will ſerue thee two manner of wayes. The one is, that thou turne thy ſelfe to the eternall father, and preſent vnto him the loue & praiſes, wher with he is exalted by all the celeſtiall court, and the labours and trauells which the Saints haue ſuſtained for him in earth, and in the vertue of al theſe things craue thou his diuine aid. The other is, that thou haue recours to thoſe glorious ſpirits, as to thẽ that do, not only deſire thy perfection, but alſo, that thou mayeſt be placed in a moſt high roume amongeſt them, demaund their ſuccour in thy combate againſt vice, & ſometimes alſo their defence at the houre of thy death.

Thou shalt alſo now and

then

then purpoſely conſidder the many and ſingular graces they haue receiued of the higheſt Creator, ſtirring vp in thy ſelf a liuely feeling of loue, and ioy that they poſſes ſo great gifts, as if the ſame were thine own, yea and more alſo thou shalt reioyce that they, & not thou had them, ſith that the will of God was ſo, And that thou mayeſt doe this exerciſe with the better order, and more facilitie, thou shalt diuide the quiers of that bleſſed company, by dayes of the weeke in this manner.

The Sunday thou shalt take the nine quiers of Angels.

Monday, S. Iohn Baptiſt.

Tueſday, the Patriarks and Prophetes.

Wedneſday, the Apoſtles.

Thure-

Thurſeday, the Martires.

Friday, the Bishopps, with the other Confeſſors.

Saturday, the Virginis, with the other holy women.

But omitte not anye day to haue recourſe to the glorious Virgine, to thy Angell guardian, to S. Michael the Archangel, and to ſom other Saint, to whom thou muſt haue particular deuotion.

Of meditation of Chriſt crucified, to ſtirre vp our affections.

Chap. 27.

HItherto I haue teated of Prayer and of Meditation of Chriſt crucified, by way of prayer, now I will treate of the

ſame meditation, to shew thee how thou mayeſt gather out certaine affections, whereof I will here ſet downe ſome.

Thou doſt purpoſe to meditate for example the coronation of our Sauiour; in this theſe points may be taken.

How our Sauior in ſcorne was clad with purple.

How his reuerend head was crowned with thornes, and ſmitten with a reede.

How his diuine face was ſpit vpon.

How the King of eternall glory adored in heauen with ſo many legions of Angelles, was in earth with fained reuerence and honor ſcorned and mocked by a moſt vile and infamous people.

By theſe or other points if

thou be desirous to kindle in thy hart, the affection of loue, enforce thy selfe with meditation of them, to increase more and more in the knowledge of the infinite goodnesse of thy Lord, and of his loue towards thee, who for thee hath suffered so much, and also to inflame thy selfe more and more in a louing affection towards him: out of this same goodnes and loue of his, thou maist easily bring forth in thy self contrition, and sorrow for hauing offended so good and loueing a Lord, who for thy iniquitie was thus euill handled, and abused in so diuerse manners.

To raise thy selfe in hope consider that a Lord so great was brought to such miserie,

to deliuer thee from the ſnares of ſinne, and of the diuell, to reconcile his eternall Father vnto thee, and to giue thee firme confidence, in all thy neede, to haue recourſe vnto him.

In like manner thou ſhalt procure ſpirituall ioy, by paſſing from his paines to their effects: that is conſidering that by them he purged thy ſinnes, and the ſinnes of the whole world, he pacified the wrath of his father, draue away the prince of darkeneſſe, killed death, brought vnto the fold againe the ſtrayed sheep, and filled againe the vacant ſeats of Angells. Moreouer moue thy ſelfe to ioy by memorie of that ioy that the Father, the Sonne, and the holy

Ghoſt, and all the Church triumphant, and millitant therby receiued.

To moue thee to ſorrow and compaſsion of thy moſt afflicted Sauior, beſides the meditation of the aforeſaide paines of his body, enter with thy thought to other greater, of his moſt ſacred ſoule. That he knowing the moſt high dignitie and goodneſſe of his Father, and louing him aboue all vnderſtanding, did grieue aboue meaſure for the offences of his creatures committed againſt him: and moreouer he ſuſtained inſpeakable ſorrow, for ſo many precious ſoules, that he did ſee ſhould bee condemned eternally for their ſinnes.

And beſides this that ſword

of ſorrow did pearce his heart, that pearced the heart of his moſt afflicted mother.

And his tender heart felt exceeding griefe for the tormẽts, that he did foreſee in his eternall wiſedome, ſo many Martires and tender virgins were to ſuffer for his loue.

Beſides this aduiſe (that in all theſe ſorrowes, thou haſt to take compaſſion of thy Sauior in ſuch manner as I haue ſaid) withall I aduertiſe thee, yea the ſame Sauior doth alſo require of thee, that thou haue a nother kinde of more true compaſsion, the which is, that thou attend hereafter to perſecute thy ſelf wills, which haue cauſed theſe his wounds, the which thou mayeſt as it were anoint with ſorrow for thy in-

gratitude.

But to moue thee to the hatred of ſin, thou ſhalt apply all the points of thy meditation to this end only, as if thy Lord and Sauiour had ſuffered for no other end, but to enduce thee to hate thy euill inclinations, and that euil eſpecially which dooeth moſt moleſt thee, and moſt diſpleaſe his diuine goodneſſe.

Laſt of all, to moue thee to admiration, conſider attentiuely who he is that ſuffereth, to witte, the word incarnate, the ſame God, who for thee was made man: For whom he ſuffered, for vs moſt vile creatures, that alwaies haue offended him. Of whom he ſuffered; of all kind of moſt wicked people, and the refuſe of the

common ſort. The paines that he ſuffered, and they are moſt vnworthy, full of ſhame, and of torment, great and horrible aboue al eſtimation. And that thou mayeſt more maruaile, weigh well the maner and the mind wherewith he ſuffered. But beleeue that thou art not able to comprehēd it as it was indeede, ſince that it paſſeth all vnderſtanding, how that poore and moſt humble Sauior amongſt ſo many anguiſhes and ſhames ſhewed an inuincible pacience, & towards thoſe cruell minds fierce and enraged againſt him, he alwaies kept the ſame heart full of ſweetneſſe, and pure loue.

Of ſenſible Deuotion, and of Ariditie, or Drie-neſſe.

Chap. 28.

SEnſible Deuotion proceedeth ſometimes of nature, ſometimes of the diuell, and ſometimes of grace; by the fruits thou ſhalt know from whence it commeth: for if there folow not in thee amẽdment of life, thou art to doubt leſt it be of the diuell, or els of nature and ſo much the more, by how much it ſhalbe accompanied with greater taſte of ſweetneſſe.

And therefore when thou ſhalt perceiue thy mind to be ſweetned with ſpirituall taſte

ſtand not to diſpute, from whence it commeth, nor leane vnto it, neither let thy ſelfe be drawne from the knowledge of thy nothing: & with greater diligence, & hatred of thy ſelf, remoue from thy heart all affectiō of what thing ſoeuer, deſiring God onely, and his pleaſure: for by this meane, whether it be of nature, or of the diuel, it will become to thee as of grace.

Ariditie or Drieneſſe may proceed in like manner from the three aforeſayde cauſes: from the diuell, for to make thy minde luke-warme, and draw it back from the ſpirituall exerciſe to worldly delights: of our ſelues through our fault and negligence: of grace, either to admonish vs, that we

bee more dilligent to leaue euery occupation that is not of God, and that tendeth not to him: or to vnite our ſelues more nearely vnto him with a full reſignation of our ſelues euen in ſpirituall delights, to the end that our affection being faſtned to theſe things, we may not diuide our hart which he would haue wholy to himſelfe.

Therefore if thou feele thy ſelfe drie or cold, enter into thy ſelfe, & ſee for what defect the ſenſible deuotion is withdrawne from thee, and wage batle againſt that, not to recouer the ſēſibiliti of grace, but to take away that which diſpleſeth the eies of God. And ſee that in no ſort, thou leaue off thy ſpiritual exerciſe, but con-

tinue them with all thy force, though they ſeeme vnto thee neuer ſo vnprofitable, and be willing to drinke of that bitter cup which that drines preſenteth vnto thee; the which although it ſhould be ſometimes accompanied, with ſo many obſcurities, and ſuch thicke darkneſſe of mind, that thou knowe not whither to turne thee, nor what courſe to take, yet neuertheleſſe, content thy ſelfe with preſent deſolation, and ſtand firme in thy croſſe, farre off from all earthly delights, although they ſhould be offered vnto thee, by the world, or by creatures, conceale thy paſsion from any perſon, except thy ghoſtly father (if thou may haue acceſſe vnto him) vnto whom thou

ſhalt diſcouer it, not to haue comfort, but to be inſtructed how to ſupport it according to the pleaſure of God. As for thy receiuing, prayers, and other ſpirituall exerciſes, or what other thing ſoeuer, vſe them not to eaſe thy paine, but to receiue ſtrenght to ſuffer it: and if thou be not able through the confuſion of thy mind, to helpe thy ſelfe with thy vnderſtanding, to pray, ſupplie with a good will and with iaculatorie prayers, and lifting vppe thy minde oft to God: and aboue al, ſuffer the burden of thy Aridity and drineſſe with patience and humble reſignation, for this aboue all others is praier moſt acceptable to God. Thus if thou wilt doe, thou ſhalt be

truly

truly deuout, true deuotion being a readineſſe of will, to follow Chriſt with thy croſſe on thy ſhoulder, by which way ſoeuer hee inuiteth and calleth vs vnto him, and to will God for God; and ſometimes to leaue God for God. And if by this many ſpirituall perſons, and eſpecially women would meaſure their profite, and not by ſenſible deuotion, they would not grieue ſo vnprofitably, & alſo vngratefully at this good turne which our Sauiour doth ſometimes vnto them, & they would attend with more feruor to follow his diuine will, which wholy woorketh to our benefit.

And in this alſo they much deceiue, themſelues, but parti-

cularly women, that when they are moleſted with feareful thoughts, they are cõfounded and diſcoraged, beleeuing that they are wholy forſaken of god (not vnderſtãding, that in a mind ful of ſuch thoughts, his diuine ſpirit can dwell) and they remaine much deiected, and almoſt become deſperat, eaſily leauing off all good exerciſe: whereby they shew themſelues little gratefull to GOD, who permitted this temptation in them to bring them to a more cleare knowledge of themſelues? and that they like diſtreſſed perſons might draw neare vnto him.

That which thou oughteſt to do in ſuch a caſe, is this, that thou enter into a deepe conſideration of thy wicked incli-

nation, the which God would haue thee to know, to be ſo ready to all euill, that without his helpe thou wouldſt fall down headlong.

Afterward begin to receiue hope and confidence, ſeeing that thy God by this danger which he doth ſhew thee, would draw thee more neare him, with prayer and with recourſe to him, for which thou art bounde to render him humble thankes.

And vnderſtand, that ſuch thoughts are better driuen away, with a skifull and patient ſufferance, then with an anxious reſiſtance.

How the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament is a moſt potent means to ouercome our paſſions.

Chap. 29.

THe moſt holy Sacrament of the Euchariſt is receiued for diuers ends, but if thou wilt particularly receiue it for aid to deſtroy thy euil inclinations, thou ſhalt diſpoſe thy ſelfe in this manner.

Before thy receiuing, hauing conuenient time, begin ouernight to conſider the deſire the Sonne of God hath, that thou receiue him in the holy Sacrament of the Alter, there by to vnite himſelf vnto thee, to the end thou maieſt ouer-

come euery vitious paſsion. This deſire in God is ſo great, that it connot be comprehended of any vnderſtanding created. But that thou in ſom ſort maiſt perceiue it, conſider two things. Firſt how much that great God deligteth to bee with vs, ſith he calleth this his delights, and requires againe of vs, that we giue him alſo in like ſort our heart. Secondly, conſider that he hateth ſinne aboue all meaſure, as an impedimēt to his vnion with vs, & as altogether contrary to his infinite perfections: for hee beeing the chiefe good, pure light, and all beautie, cannot but hate, and haue in great abhomination, ſinne, which is no other thing but darkneſſe, defect, and the blot of our ſoules.

And the better to imprint in thy mind, this inflamed desire of thy Sauiour, turne thy thoughts to the workes of the olde and new Testament, and particularly to that of his death, and passion, for all this was wholly performed to deliuer vs wretches from our sinnes, and from euery will of ours that is contrary to him.

Whereupon the illuminated seruants of God do affirme that our blessed Lord, to annihilate in vs any little passion whatsoeuer, & self-wil, wold againe, if it were needfull, expose himselfe to a thousand deaths.

By the which considerations, knowing the desire thy Sauiour hath, to enter into thy soule, thou shalt stirre vppe in

thy

thy ſelfe a feruent will to receiue him, with theſe or ſuch like iaculatory prayers.

Ah, come my Sauiour, and ſuccour this thy miſerable creature againſt his aduerſaries! when will that houre be that I may receiue thee? when will the time come that I comforted by thee the bread of life, shal ouercome my owne proper will.

Afterward being ſtrengthned with the hope of the comming of thy Sauior, call often times to battell that paſsion, with the which thou dooeſt fight, and enforce thy ſelfe to repreſſe it with redoubled & diſdainefull wils, and to bring foorth afterward, actes of deſires, of the vertue contrary to the ſame paſsion. And thus

thou ſhalt continue the euening (as I haue ſaide) and the morning after thou ſhalt be awaked.

When the time of receiuing comes, a litle before thou ſhalt briefely conſider thy defects, and vnfaithfulnes, which thou haſt vſed towards thy Sauior, from the time of thy laſt receiuing the Bleſſed Sacrament, and with ſhamefaſtneſſe, and with a holy feare, thou ſhalt be confounded, for thy ingratitude, and vnworthineſſe But thinking afterward vpon the vnſpeakeable goodneſſe of God (who although thou haſt bin rebellious vnto him, yet notwithſtanding, he willeth that thou receiue him) thou ſhalt goe confidently to that ſacred banquet. After thou

haſt

haſt receiued, withdraw thy ſelfe as ſoone as thou canſt into the cloſet of thy heart, and lay open to thy Sauior thy defects and wants, ſaying thus in thy mind: thou ſeeſt my Sauior, how eaſily I offend thee, and how much I want, hovv ſtrong this paſsion oppreſſeth me, and that it is not poſſible that by my ſelfe I can be deliuered. Therefore this battale is thine, and from thee onely I hope for victorie: afterwards turne thy ſelfe to the father and offer vp to him, for the ſame effect, his moſt bleſſed Sonne, whom novv thou haſt vvithin thee: and with faith expect his diuine ſuccor, the which wil not faile thee although thou ſhouldſt not pre ſently feele his helpe.

How by this ſame Sacrament We may ſtirre vp in vs the affections of Loue.

Chap. 30.

TO the ende thou mayeſt ſtirre vp in thee with this moſt holy ſacrament the loue which deſtroyeth, and conſumeth all ſelfe-will, thou ſhalt turne thy thoughts to the loue of God towardes thee; meditating in the night before, how that great and omnipotent Lord, not contented to haue created thee to his owne image and likneſſe, and to haue ſent downe to the earth his onely begotten Sonne, to ſerue thee three and thirtie

yeares,

yeares, in thy iniquities, ſuffe-
ring ſo great trauailes, and the
moſt painefull death of the
croſſe to redeeme thee, he
would further leaue him vn-
to thee, in the Sacrament of
the Euchariſt, for thy foode,
& for thy needs, in the which
moſt precious gift, to inflame
thee wholy into his loue, con-
ſider: firſt the giuer, who is
God himſelf, that power, wiſ-
dome, and increated goodnes
which hath no end, whoſe
higneſſe and perfection infi-
nitely execede the reach of a-
ny vnderſtanding created. Se-
condly cõſider the gift which
is his onely Sonne: of maieſty,
and of greatneſſe equall with
his father, and of the ſame ſub-
ſtance and nature vvith him.

Now if a little & vile thing

that comes from the hand of an earthly King, be ſo much eſteemed, and accounted of in reſpect of the giuer, what account shal be made of this celeſtiall gift, and the ſame of incõprehenſible excellency, being indeed the very true Sonne of God, true God, and giuen vs by God himſelf. Moreouer lift vp thy ſelfe to thinke of the eternitie of this Loue, by the which before all times it was decreed in his moſt high vviſdome, to giue thee himſelfe, being an infinite good, reioycing from the bottome of thy hart, reaſon thus with thy ſelf; and is it euen ſo, that euen in that endleſſe eternitie, my miſery was ſo greatly loued and eſteemed, that my God did thinke vpon me, and deſired

with an ardent wil to giue me him ſelf for food? Finally turne thy thought to the puritie of the loue, that ſo great a Lord hath shewed vnto thee, weighing wel that it is not as worldly loues are, mingled with ſome intereſt of his, or deſert of thine, becauſe onely through his owne bountie, and charity, he hath wholy giuen him ſelfe to thee.

Thus ſweetely pondering with thy ſelfe, thou mayeſt ſay in thy heart. Ah my Lorde, wherefore loueſt thou mee ſo much thy vnworthy creature? what wouldeſt thou with me, O King of Glory, that am but a little duſt? I perceiue well O Lord in the fire of thy charity, that thou haſt one onely diſſignement which shevveth me

thy diuine loue, to be the purer, ſith that thou giueſt mee thy loue for no other end, but that I may giue thee mine, and wholy thou giueſt thee, to me, that I may vvholy giue my ſelf to thee, and this not for anie neede that thou haſt of me, but becauſe that I liuing in thee, may by the vnion of loue bee vnited vnto thee, and that the vileneſſe of my earthly heart, may be made one diuine heart with thee. The which thing conſidered, thou ſhalt offer thy ſelfe to the good pleaſure of God, vvith the greateſt affectiõ that poſsibly thou canſt being ready vvith an inflamed deſire alvvayes to follovve his moſt bleſſed vvill. And vvhen thou ſhalt feele this deſire wel kindled in thee, thou ſhalt ſee

vvith thy mind a great will & deſire that hee hath, that the next day followving thou doe open thy heart vnto him, that hee may enter and abide vvith thee, and ſuppe vvith thee, and delight himſelfe together with thee. Whereupon thou ſhalt ſtirre vp in thy ſelfe, a deſire to receiue him, with theſe iaculatory prayers: Ah heauenly and diuine Manna, vvhen ſhall that houre come, that I may receiue thee to thy contentment? When ſhall I bee vnited vnto thee by true loue? When for thee (O life of my ſoule) ſhall I forſake all mine owne vvill, and all my imperfections.

And vvith theſe and other like iaculatory prayers, and vvith conſideration of the

pointes aforeſaide, both the euening and the morning', thou ſhalte kindle this deſire in thee to receiue him, to bee vnited vnto him and to pleaſe him.

And ſee that being collected into thy ſelfe, thou keepe the powers of thy ſoule voyd and free from all curioſitie, vaine thoughts, and earthlie affection, and the ſenſes of thy body, as it were faſting from the delight of their ſeueral obiects. And after thou haſt receiued him, ſhut vp thy ſelfe in the cloſet of thy heart, and in this or ſuch like maner talk with thy Sauior: O King of kings, what hath brought thee vnto me, that am wretched, miſerable, poore, blind, & naked? and he will anſwer thee,

Loue: O loue vncreated, O ſweet loue, what deſireſt thou of me? No other thing (ſaieth hee) but loue; no other fire would I haue to burne in the earth of thy heart, but the fire of my loue, that it may conſume all other loue, and burne vp all thy ſelfe-will; this I demaund, becauſe I deſire to be wholly thine, and that thou mayeſt be wholly mine. The which cã neuer be whilſt thou not making a full reſignation of thy ſelfe (which ſo much delighteth mee) ſtill dooſt remaine faſtened to the loue of thy ſelfe, and to thine owne iudgement, and conceits, to euery little will of thine, and to the reputation of thy ſelfe.

I demand of thee the hatred of thy ſelf, for to giue thee my

loue, I demand thy heart, that it may enter, and vnite it ſelfe with mine, for this was the cauſe why mine was opened vppon the croſſe. I deſire of thee (O my louing ſoule) that thou will nothing, thinke nothing, vnderſtand nothing, ſee nothing out of me ſo that I alſo may will, vnderſtand, think, and ſee all things in thee, in ſuch manner that thy nothing may be ſwallowed vp in the depth of my infinite goodnes, and be conuerted into it. And thus thou ſhalt be in me moſt happie, and I content in thee.

In the end after this, thou ſhalt offer to God the father, his ſonne, for thy ſelfe, for the whole world and for the ſouls departed, with the memorie

and vnion of that oblation which then he made of himſelfe, when he hanged bloudy vppon the croſſe. And thou maiſt in this maner offer vp al the ſacrifices which are offered vp that day in the holy Church.

Of ſpirituall Receiuing.

Chap. 31

ALthough thou canſt not receiue thy Sauior more then once a day ſacramentally, notwithſtanding thou maieſt receiue him ſpiritually, euery houre and moment. And this cannot be taken from any creature, but by their owne negligence, or other voluntary fault. And ſometimes it may

proue, that this ſpiritual receiuing ſhall be more profitable to our ſelues, and acceptable to God, then many other Sacramentall receiuings in reſpect of the wants, and defects of them that receiue. Therefore how oft ſoeuer thou ſhalt diſpoſe and prepare thy ſelfe to this ſpiritual receiuing thou ſhalt find the Sonne of God ready with his owne proper hands to feede thee ſpiritually with himſelf. And thou maiſt prepare thy ſelfe in this manner.

Turne thy ſelfe to him for this end; and briefely conſider thy defects, be ſorie that thou haſt offended him, and with a louing affection, craue of him, that he wil vouchſafe to come into thy poore ſoule to

feede it with himſel for otherwiſe, when thou goeſt about to vſe violence to thy ſelfe, or to mortifie any paſsion in thee or to exerciſe any acte of vertue, do it to this end and turne thee to thy Sauior, and cal vpon him with a feruent deſire in the ſecret of thy ſoule. Or againe, finally, calling to mind the laſt time that thou didſt receiue before, ſay with an inflamed deſire: when (my god) shall I receiue thee another time in the Sacrament of the Altar? ah why comeſt thou not now with the ſame vertue ſpiritually vnto me?

Of Thankesgiuing.

Chap. 32.

BEcauſe all the good we do is of God, and from God, we are bound to render vnto him alone humble thanks, for euery good action of ours, and victorie, and for al his benefits particular and common. And to do this in du maner, cõſider the end that moueth our Lord to giue his graces vnto vs; for vpon this cõſideration, depen-deth the true giuing of thanks. And becauſe in euery benefit our Lord intendeth principal-ly his honor, and our profit: acknowledge firſt of all his power, wiſedome, and good-neſſe, which appeareth in the

benefit

benefit. Then conſider, that in thee, there is not any thing worthy of the benefit: yea nothing els but demerit & ingratitude. And finally obay his diuine will, performing that which he in lieu of the benefit requireth of thee: to witte, that thou ſerue and loue him And therefore adde hereunto a full and entire oblation of thy ſelfe, the which thou ſhalt doe in this manner following.

Of

Of the oblation of thy ſelfe.

Chap. 33.

TO the end that the offring of thy ſelfe may be acceptable to God, conſider that his bleſſed Sonne whilſt he liued on earth, not only alwayes offred vp himſelfe, and all his works, but vs alſo together with himſelfe, to his eternall Father.

When therefore thou wilt offer vp thy ſelfe to God, firſt looke vpon Chriſt our Lord, how at this day he offers vp himſelfe in the aforeſaid maner, and make thy offering in the vertue, and vnion of his; or rather make that very ſelfe ſame offering of Chriſt, wher-

in he included thine. And more then this, let this thy offering be without proprietie, or any part of thy owne intereſt, not reſpecting, either earthly or heauenly goods, but the pure wil of God, and diuine prouidence, vnto the which thou oughteſt to ſubmit thy will, and to ſacrifice thy ſelfe a perpetual holocauſt, and thus forgettinge euery creature, thou ſhalt ſay, behold my Sauior and Creator, a peece of clay in the hand of thy diuine prouidēce; make of mee that which ſeemeth beſt to thee, and pleaſeth thee in life, in death, and after death, as well in time, as in eternitie.

So in like maner, when thou wilt offer vp thy faſtings, pray

ers, or other good workes, behold how the Sonne of God, doth offer to his Father the ſame faſtings of thine, thy prayers, and workes, together with his owne, and then being thus vnited and offered vp by his Sonne, doe thou alſo offer them, and thou ſhalt know, that thy oblations doe proceede from a ſincere heart, when thou ſhalt make them in time of aduerſitie, which thou doſt patiently ſuffer, and when with effects and deedes thou ſhalt execute the diuine pleaſure. And when thou wilt offer vp the workes of Chriſt to his father, for thy ſpiritual debtes, thou ſhalt do it in this manner.

Looke firſt vpon thy ſins confuſedly or ſometimes in

particular. And ſeeing plainly, that it is not poſsible, that thou canſt of thy ſelfe pacifie the wrath of God, nor ſatisfie his diuine iuſtice, thou shalt haue recourſe to the life and paſsion of our Lord and Sauior, thinking vpon ſome work or paine of his as for example; when he did faſt, pray, or shed his blood, wher thou shalt cõſider, that for to pacifie his father towards thee, and for the debt of thine inquity, he doth offer vp that worke or paine, as it were, ſaying: behold O eternall Father, that I do ſatisfie thy diuine iuſtice fully for the ſinnes of N. may it pleaſe thy diuine maieſtie to forgiue him and to receiue him into the number of thy elect, and at that preſent time, offer thou

vp for thy ſelfe and for others, that ſame offering and prayer to God the father, humbly beſeeching him, that in the vertue of them and to his honor, he wil forgiue thee al thy ſins, and this thou mayſt do; not only paſsing from one myſterie to another, but euen from one acte alſo to another of euery myſterie.

The Concluſion.

THere might be many other things ſaid concerning this exerciſe of ſo great importance; but let this ſuffice, being as much as now I am able to diſcourſe vnto thee: which yet thou ſhalt finde to be not a little, if thou dooſt force thy ſelfe to effect

the things which I haue propounded. But reſpecting the capacitie of thy vnderſtãding, and the breuitie which was needefull for me to vſe, it behoueth thee to ioyne therevnto an attentiue conſideration, for there by (but much more by continuall exerciſe & practiſe) thou mayeſt get alwaies greater ſtrength and force by thy victory.

Reſolue thy ſelfe couragiouſly in the name of God to take vp thy weapons: for this is a battel that no man can flie, and he that doth not fight, of neceſsitie remaineth vanquiſhed and ſlaine: and hope of peace there is none; ſince thou haſt to deale with thoſe enemies that moſt ctuelly kill, them, who moſt ſeek to ioyne

in friendship with them. Be not diſmayed becauſe they are fierce and mightie, ſeeing that all their might and force is in the hand of that captaine, for whoſe honor thou doſt fight: and in this battaile none can looſe but he that wil himſelfe: and if thy Lorde for whom thou doeſt wage this battell, ſhould not ſo readily graunt thee the victorie, yet faint not; for thou oughteſt to be more then aſſured (and this alſo ſhall help thee to fight confidently) that he by his goodnes and power, turneth all things euen thoſe that ſeeme moſt contrary (be they of what ſort ſoeuer) vnto the good of his faithful warriors. Therefore if thy victory be prolonged, reſt aſſured, that it is either to deli-

uer thee from pride, and to keep thee vnder; or to the end, thou mayſt increaſe in vertue, and become a more expert, and wel practiſed ſouldier, or for ſome other good of thine, which he then for thy profit hideth from thee.

Thou therfore my deareſt Daughter, that thou maiſt not be vngratefull to this Lorde which loueth thee ſo much, and for thee hath ſuffered death, & ouercome the world; take this battell in hand with a coragious hart, & attend according to the good pleaſure, and commaundement of thy captain, to the total deſtructiõ of al thy enemies, for if thou leaue but one aliue, it shalbe as a chip in thy eie, or a launce in thy bowels, which ſhal hinder

thee in the courſe of ſo glorious a victory.

Pugnabis contra eos vſque ad internecionem 1. reg 15. ver. 18.

Sit nomen Domini Ieſu benedictum.

BIBLIOTHECA LAMBETHANA